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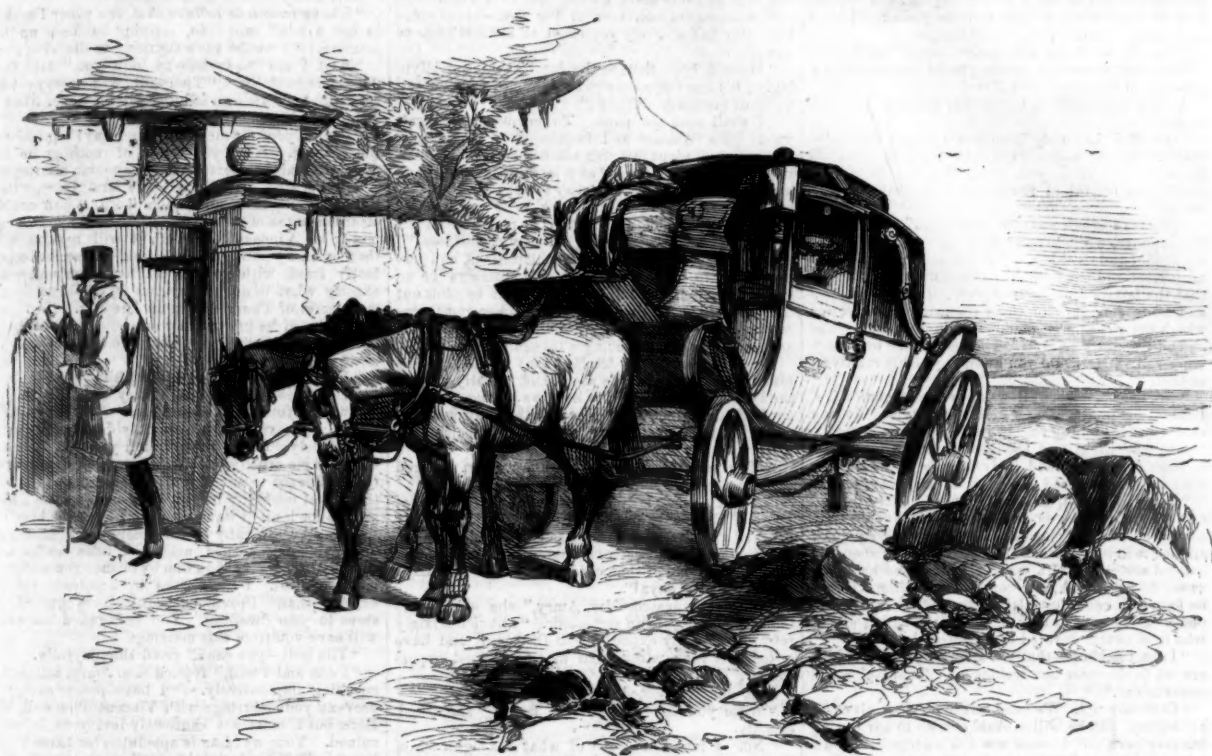
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[MR. WILMER ARRIVES AT MRS. GABSON'S.]

## A LIFE AT STAKE.

BY LEON LEWIS.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

Equal their flame, unequal was their care;  
One loved with hope, one languished with despair.

*Dryden.*

On reaching her home Ilde separated from her friend and hastened to her own room, to prepare herself for her interview with her father. She hastened to divest herself of her riding attire, refreshed her weakened energies by a bath, and then dressed herself with exquisite neatness and care. A rose-coloured robe gave to her cheeks something of the colour they had lost, and she entwined among her loose curls a trailing, odorous vine-spray, whose green leaves and tiny scarlet blossoms contrasted well with the golden brown of her hair. Her toilet completed, she went to her father's room.

He was lying upon a couch drawn up before a window, and his wide-open eyes were fixed upon the shifting clouds with an intensely wistful expression. He was not aroused by the quiet entrance of his daughter, and she softly approached his side and looked anxiously upon him for a moment before betraying her presence.

It seemed to her that he had grown thinner and paler during the past few hours. There was a wan look about his mild face which she had never noticed before. His eyes looked heavy, and were underlined by a purple crescent that told of tears and sleeplessness. His mouth, about which even the devoted daughter recognized an expression indicating weakness of will and indecision of character, was drawn into heavy lines at the corners, and told plainly of a weary and grief-worn soul. A lock of hair that fell carelessly over his thin forehead was almost as white as snow. His attitude was in keeping with his appearance, and indicated an almost utter hopelessness.

"Father!" whispered the girl, softly, her brown eyes brimming over with tears, and her slender

figure drooping painfully at the sad picture before her. "Father!"

That sweet sad voice, low as were its tones, seemed to blend with his thoughts. His lip quivered, and his eyes assumed a thoughtful look, as if he were endeavouring to pierce the veil that concealed from him the future. But he did not turn his head.

"Father!" again said the maiden, and this time her voice took a pleading tone, through which ran an undercurrent of anguish. "Dear father, I am come!"

He heard her now. His wan, thin face lighted up with sudden joy, his lips quivered, his hands worked nervously, and he looked at her with wildly questioning eyes.

"Thank heaven, you have come, my darling," he cried, making an effort to rise from his reclining position. "I did not expect you so soon. Have—have you good news for me?"

The maiden gently placed him back upon his pillow, and smiled reassuringly, as she knelt beside his couch and bent over him and kissed him.

"I did not find the paper, papa," she said, uttering the worst at once, "but I have discovered that it is probably not at Oakshaw."

"Not at Oakshaw," he faltered.

"No, but you must not despair. It is true that everything looks dark around us now, papa, but you know the old adage—it's always darkest before the dawn. I have but little grounds for it, it is true, but I feel a conviction nevertheless that we, and not Therwell, shall triumph!"

She forced herself to speak with a cheerfulness she was far from feeling. He looked at her earnestly and anxiously, but she met his gaze brightly, smiling at him and looking, as it seemed to him, the incarnation of hope and encouragement.

"Blessed little comforter!" he murmured, clinging to her hand as if he depended upon it for safety. "Oh, Ilde, I hope and pray that your conviction may be founded upon truth. What has happened to encourage you?"

This was a question not easily to be answered. "Perhaps I had better relate my adventure, papa,"

she answered, smiling, "and you can then judge for yourself whether I have cause for hopefulness."

She drew some cushions beside the couch, seated herself upon them, and then, holding his hand, and keeping her clear dark eyes fixed upon his, began her story. She told first how she had enlisted her favourite groom into her service, and how she appointed to meet him upon the previous night, in company with Miss Arsdale.

"So Kate and I stole down through the gardens, papa, until we came to the labourer-bower. To our astonishment, Mrs. Amry started up out of the thicket—"

"Mrs. Amry?"

Ilde replied to this exclamation by briefly narrating her acquaintance with the new seamstress, and then returned to the original subject. She related how Mrs. Amry had cautioned her to silence and had then drawn her and Miss Arsdale into the thicket, where they had crept beside her.

"I should have thought her crazy," said the baronet.

"Not so, papa. She was listening to two men, who were holding a secret interview. I recognized the voices immediately as belonging to Therwell and Hoadley. They were talking of our affairs, and Hoadley said that Therwell must pay him more when he came into possession of Edencourt, else he might be tempted to betray him. Enough was said to prove clearly that they were engaged in a conspiracy of which Therwell is the master-spirit."

Sir Allyn uttered a joyful exclamation.

"There were three listeners," he said. "The evidence of the three may help us materially."

"They said nothing, papa, that could clear you of any charge they may wish to make," replied Ilde, gently. "Their words would be counteracted by that paper which Therwell can show. But if that document were destroyed, these proofs of a conspiracy might assist us."

"And you failed to find the paper?" groaned the baronet.

"Yes, father, but I think we have some clue to its whereabouts."



The maiden proceeded to narrate the injunction of Mrs. Amry with regard to the mahogany box, and to detail her discovery that the new seamstress was not unacquainted with Therwell. She then told of her journey, of her meeting with Lord Tresilian, of the night ride, of the arrival at Oakshaw, the search, the letters she had discovered, the imprisonment, and the escape.

"A singular adventure, my darling," said the baronet, "and one that I would have spared you even at the cost of much pain to myself. I cannot bear to think that a delicate girl like you should have undergone so much fatigue and danger."

"But think of the alternative, papa," said Ildo. "One night's peril is nothing to be compared to a life-time of bitter suffering."

A deep shadow flitted over her father's face and eyes.

"Oh, if I had only been more brave, more decided!" he moaned. "I might have averted all these sorrows from you, Ildo, if I had been less weak, less fearful of the adverse censures of the world!"

"Don't reproach yourself, dear papa," was the gentle response, while his daughter's manner was infinitely tender and soothing. "It will all be well. You must hope and not despair. I was about to tell you that the letters I discovered were all signed 'M. G.', and bore reference to some important charge, for which the writer was paid. One of the letters was signed 'Your sister, M. G.' The writer was evidently Therwell's sister. Do you know any of his relatives, or their names?"

"No, dear. Therwell was never communicative. I fancy he was ashamed of his relatives. At any rate, I know nothing except that he is a widower."

Ildo was silent and thoughtful for a brief space, and her father watched her changing expression as if he expected to read his doom in her lovely face.

"Papa," she said, at length, "we must try to find out who his sister is and where she lives. I am convinced that the charge to which she so frequently alluded to in her letters is the care of that paper. He has led something of a wandering life, and he would never have carried that, connect with him, risking its loss. He must have left it somewhere, and what place can be so probable as the hands of his sister, who is of course devoted to his interests?"

"I don't doubt but that you are right, Ildo; but how are we to discover her residence?" Therwell would never tell us."

"Certainly not. We must not betray ourselves by an inquiry. But he will probably write to her during his stay here. If I could see the addresses of his letters! I will order them to be brought to me before posting."

"He posts them himself," interrupted the baronet. "He posted one to-day. No, Ildo, he is too cunning for us!"

"Straightforwardness sometimes conquers cunning," said Ildo, quietly. "If you will only be hopeful, papa, I am sure I can do something. There's that clerk at the post-office whom you sent to school and nearly educated. He would do anything for me and I shall not hesitate to ask him to write down all the addresses of the letters which Therwell sends. There could be no harm accruing to the clerk through that, if the fact were to be made known. The only thing to fear is that Therwell, having written to-day, may not write again!"

"I leave everything in your hands, Ildo," responded her father. "I am too weak and ill to do anything but pray for your success. So Lord Tresilian went with you?"

A bright, cheerful colour suffused the maiden's innocent cheeks, but her sweet eyes did not droop, and her manner betrayed no sense of embarrassment.

"Yes, he went with us, papa," she answered. "We could have done nothing without him!"

Sir Allyn sighed. "Be careful, darling," he said, tenderly. "Do not allow yourself to love poor Gay, and do not encourage the boy to love you. We must not involve another life in the wreck of ours!"

"But, papa," said Ildo, and her glorious magnetic eyes flashed with a strange, sweet radiance, and her countenance glowed with tender resoluteness, "I love Gay now. I shall always love him. I believe I have loved him since our childhood, for my heart was drawn towards him the first moment of our meeting the other day, and her tones grow low as she made the confession. "I tell you this frankly, dear papa, because Gay loves me as he will never love anyone else, and because," here her voice grew fuller and stronger, "I know that I shall yet become his wife!"

"You know it, darling?"

"Yes, father. The great Being who formed Gay and me for each other—who made us so much alike that at our first meeting we felt an electric thrill, the sweetness of mutual love—that all-loving Father

would never permit us to be torn apart. He would never doom me to a loveless existence with Therwell, and condemn Gay to a solitary, disappointed life. I cannot help hoping and believing this when I reflect upon the watchful care that extends over even the humblest of human creatures!"

Her tone of fervid faith in the justice and goodness of Providence kindled an answering sentiment in the bosom of her father. His face grew hopeful and eager, as hers flushed with crimson and became confused and downcast, as she laid bare the holiest and most sacred emotions of her soul—those emotions she had scarcely yet dared to acknowledge to herself.

"We will hope then to the last!" said Sir Allyn, laying his hand upon her bowed young head. "Keep up your faith, my darling!"

"I shall work too, papa. To-morrow I shall call upon Miss Wilmer and inquire after Shawcross. Then I shall adopt my plan about Therwell's letters. I will see Broadley again, as a last resource. I have some hope that Mrs. Amry may assist me. But you are excited now, father, and look as if you had not slept last night; let me put you to rest, and then I will have an interview with our new seamstress!"

The baronet yielded to Ildo's solicitations, and permitted her to soothe him into the slumbers he so greatly needed. She drew the curtains to shut out the light of the waning day, and with her gentle, caressing hand on his forehead soothed away his pains and cares, thereby inducing a tranquil sleep.

When his breathing testified that he had become lost to consciousness, she arose and silently quitted the apartment, hastening to her own. Then she rang her bell, and directed the servant who answered her summons to request Mrs. Amry, the new seamstress, to come to her at once.

A few minutes later the strange woman entered her presence.

She had a very lady-like appearance, in her neat attire of black silk, and with her gray hair smoothly brushed away from her forehead, and Ildo was impressed as she had been before, with the conviction that she was one of that unfortunate class who have known "better days!"

"Please be seated, Mrs. Amry," she said, courteously, pointing to an arm-chair. "I have but lately returned from my expedition to Oakshaw, and have asked for your attendance at the earliest opportunity."

Mrs. Amry accepted the seat indicated. "Were you supposed, Miss Dare?" she asked, quickly.

"No. I found no trace of what I sought, or of the box you described to me."

The woman looked intensely disappointed.

"But I think I have gained a clue to it," said Ildo. "Perhaps you can enable me to follow up this clue, Mrs. Amry. It is evident to me that you know Therwell, and that you are familiar with some portion at least of his history. I beg you to be frank with me, and answer the questions I may ask of you."

The seamstress looked troubled and uneasy. She hesitated, appearing to debate within herself, and replied:

"Ask what you will, Miss Dare. As far as I can, I will answer your questions. So long as you do not trench upon what I deem it best to keep secret a little longer, I shall not hesitate to speak frankly."

Ildo became grave at the reservation implied in this response, but took a seat near the woman she had befriended, and commenced her task at once.

"It seems to me," she said, "that you may possibly bear some relationship to Therwell. Are you his wife?"

Mrs. Amry smiled and shook her head, touching her gray locks significantly.

"No, Miss Dare, I am not his wife," she answered, her voice full of sternness, strangely at variance with her smile.

"He has been married, I understand," said Ildo, apologetically. "Papa told me that Therwell is a widower. Do not be offended at my apparent rudeness, Mrs. Amry. You do not know in what a critical position I am placed. My father is ill and unable to protect me. Therwell has unfortunately a hold upon papa, and he claims my hand in marriage as the price of his forbearance. You can hardly imagine with what loathing I look upon this projected union or upon Therwell."

"Yes, I can imagine it," declared the seamstress, with singular emphasis.

"At present I am at the mercy of our enemy," continued the maiden, won by the woman's evident sympathy to confide in her. "If I could only see some way of escape from the bonds he is expecting to put upon me. Can you help me?"

Mrs. Amry was silent.

"Are you his mother or sister?" inquired the baronet's daughter.

"Neither. Thank heaven, not one drop of his blood flows in my veins!"

"Do you know anything of his family or relatives? He has a sister. Do you know her name?"

"I know only that he has a sister Maria. She was married, I believe, but I never heard her last name. Therwell always called her Maria. He said once she was very fond of him, but he was not sure if she did not love money better."

"You do not know where his sister lived?"

Mrs. Amry replied in the negative.

"I have reason to believe that the paper I seek is in her hands," said Ildo, striving to keep up her courage. "I would give anything to discover her."

"And I am powerless to help you," said Mrs. Amry, regretfully. "Therwell was always very reticent about his own affairs, and he never liked to talk of his family."

"Cannot you help me in any other way?" questioned the maiden. "Do you know of nothing he has done that might operate as a bar to our marriage?"

"And if I do, Miss Dare," said Mrs. Amry, with a lingering emphasis upon each word, "how could I clear the name of your father? If Sir Allyn be in the power of Vincent Therwell, it will require more than ordinary power to free him. I cannot be perfectly frank with you as yet, for I am undecided exactly what to do. The truth is, I hold an important secret of Therwell's in my keeping. He thinks me dead. If he knew of my existence, and my being here at Oakshaw, he would scruple at nothing to remove me from his path."

"You know something against him then?"

"I do. Something that I may not tell you now, but which you shall soon know. If that paper of which you have spoken were only destroyed I could move freely. I may, however, tell you that Therwell wronged me cruelly, embittered my life, dragged me from affluence to poverty, and robbed me of the only thing that made life bright. For many years I have sought for him. I have wandered over the kingdom stopping occasionally to earn money to continue my journey, being turned aside on false tracks continually, or coming upon him by chance years after he had vanished. I came here by accident—yet not exactly that. Providence must have guided my steps to your dwelling. You befriended me and I will save you from this marriage."

"You will—you can?" cried Ildo, joyfully.

"I can and I will," replied Mrs. Amry, arising and speaking impressively. "I have power enough to prevent your marriage with Vincent Therwell, Miss Dare, but I must act cautiously lest your father be ruined. Your wedding is appointed for three weeks hence. Before a fortnight shall elapse you shall be free from Therwell's bonds."

Ildo yielded implicit faith to the promise so honestly and earnestly uttered.

"And my father?" she asked.

"For your father you must work yourself, Miss Dare. If I understood his secret I might benefit him. As I do not I can only say try and get hold of that important paper, or induce one of the witnesses to betray the others. But rest assured this unmitigated marriage shall never take place."

With that assertion she quietly and silently withdrew before Ildo could question her further, leaving the maiden's mind in a whirl of joyful yet painful emotions.

Could this woman save her, and could she herself save her father?

#### CHAPTER XXX.

But there's a sure vicissitude before  
Of light and darkness, happiness and woe.  
The dawn of day is a approach to night,  
And grief is the conclusion of delight.

Young.

THE journey of Mr. Wilmer, with Mrs. Barrat and his unconscious captive, was of several hours' duration. He proceeded by lonely and unfrequented roads, avoiding towns and hamlets, and drove his swift-limbed horses as furiously as their mettle would permit. The animals seemed almost to fly at times, and Mr. Wilmer regarded the panorama of trees, hedges, and dwellings with a grim and satisfied smile, frequently glancing backward to assure himself that no pursuer was emulating his mad speed.

"This is something like it, Jane," he muttered, his voice sounding unnatural as it issued through the false hair concealing his mouth. "At this rate we shall almost be housed before Adah's absence can be discovered at her home."

"Not quite," returned the ex-governess, with a glance at the young girl, who lay silent and helpless among her cushions. "We shall get to our journey's end about nine o'clock, if we keep on as we are going!"

"I should like to see Sir Hugh Chellis's face when he hears that she is gone!" declared Mr. Wilmer, with a chuckling laugh. "He is in love with her,



and I am inclined to think she is half in love with him. But she sent him away from Monrope, luckily for me, and refused to live with him. He will probably search for her, and so will Captain Reddell. They can hardly suspect me of abducting her, since we took the precaution to leave our lodging-house the other day and report that we were going to the Continent. Do you suppose," he added, "that your cousin will be ready to receive us?"

"Certainly," was the response. "I saw her yesterday, and made every preparation for our coming. She is an avaricious old creature, and would do anything for money."

"Are you sure her house will be quite safe?"

"Safe! You will think so when you see it. It is at least five miles from any village, and situated in the loneliest spot that can be found on the whole coast. There isn't a neighbour within half a mile, but Maria doesn't care for that, since she is the most unsocial creature in the world. I am sure she needn't live as she does if she did not wish to do so, for she has a rich brother, who is about to make a splendid marriage!"

"Has she? Why, I didn't know you had any rich relations?"

"I haven't many; Vincent Therwell has become rich of late years. He used to be poor enough, goodness knows. Until I saw Maria yesterday I had no idea that he was anything more than a poor secretary, as he used to be. He has been a trader, and is now going to marry a baronet's daughter. Maria is as devoted to him as she is to money, and that is saying a great deal."

At this moment Lady Chellis stirred uneasily, and Mrs. Barrat saturated under the drugged handkerchief and laid it upon her victim's face.

"There, your niece will not awaken now until we are perfectly ready to welcome her," said the ex-governess. "I think, if you won't miss my society, Mr. Wilmer, I will doze a little myself!"

Her employer, assuring her that he liked solitude, she leaned her head against the side of the vehicle, and was soon asleep.

When she awakened it was broad daylight, and they were nearing the sea, as was evidenced by the freshness of the air that blew into their faces. The horses had lost much of their vigour, but still kept on with persistent swiftness, urged by the frequent lash of their grim driver. The road they were traversing was thinly populated, houses being few and far between, but they caught glimpses now and then of pretty villages hidden in distant valleys, and of church spires crowning far-off hills, their gilded vanes shining in the morning sun.

At length they came in sight of the sea—a blue, restless, boundless stretch of water, flecked with white-crested waves, upon which a few fishing-vessels rocked gently, and over which hovered the broad-winged sea-gulls. It was a beautiful sight as it lay like a huge jewel beneath the early sun, but neither Mr. Wilmer nor Mrs. Barrat had eyes for beauty, and after an idle glance or two at the broad vista they engaged anew in conversation.

The morning was well advanced when the light vehicle proceeded slowly along a sandy lane leading directly to the sea. It was a quiet, desolate spot in which the travellers found themselves. Only one dwelling was within sight; the trees around were few, the vegetation scanty, and the rocks lining the coast were high, bold, and plentiful. In the expressive language of the fishermen of the neighbouring region this spot was called "the barren land," and one could not fail to recognize the appropriateness of the appellation.

As we have said, there was but one dwelling within view. This was a small stone house, standing in a sand-patch among the rocks, and with only a narrow strip of beach between it and the sea. Nothing could be imagined more lonely than the situation of this dwelling. It had been built by a romantically inclined London gentleman, who for a season or two had brought his family here to enjoy the sea-breezes, but the barrenness and desolation of the spot, the want of society, and the monotony of the scenery, had induced him, soon after to sell it at a sacrifice, to an individual to whom its drawbacks served as attractions.

It was to this house that the travellers were bound.

A stone wall encircled the path surrounding the cottage, and in the midst of the wall a carriage-gate was hung. Mr. Wilmer stopped his horses in front of this gate and alighted, and essayed to open it, but his efforts were fruitless. It was securely locked.

"This is strange," he said, in a tone of annoyance. "Hold the reins, Jane, while I go in search of your cousin."

He proceeded to the smaller gate, opened it without difficulty, and hastened up the path to the house. To his astonishment every door was locked, every

window closed, and no one appeared in answer to his summons.

He returned, angry and alarmed, to his confederate.

"She has gone," he said—"perhaps to betray us. Nothing remains for us but to beat a retreat as quickly as possible. What shall we do? Where shall we take Adah?"

"My cousin may have gone for a walk," suggested Mrs. Barrat, uneasily. She would never think of betraying us. Besides, she doesn't know who Adah is. Ah, what is that speck yonder on that wave?"

She pointed eagerly seaward. Mr. Wilmer looked in the direction indicated, and soon pronounced the object in question to be a small boat, and a farther scrutiny revealed the fact that it was occupied by a woman, and was being rapidly propelled shorewards.

Evidently they had been seen by the boatwoman, who was hastening to meet them.

As the boat came nearer, and the woman's figure was shown more plainly, the ex-governess exclaimed:

"Yes, it's my cousin, Mrs. Garson. We are safe now, Mr. Wilmer—perfectly safe!"

She sprang out lightly as she spoke, and made her way down to the beach, where she awaited her relative's arrival.

Mr. Wilmer stationed himself beside his vehicle, where he could keep guard over his captive, and yet watch the approach of the boat with whose occupant he was as yet unacquainted.

The little skiff came on, urged by strong, rapid strokes, or rather sweeps of the oar, dealt by a powerful arm. In a few minutes the keel of the craft grated upon the sands, the rower sprang out, and Mrs. Barrat saluted her with many professions of affection.

Mrs. Garson was a woman past middle age. She was tall and masculine in appearance; her face was stern and strongly marked; her eyes were deeply set; her bony forehead was shaded by locks of iron gray; and she walked with long strides.

She had a brawny arm and strong, large, freckled hands, which almost crushed the more delicate ones of her cousin. Her attire consisted of a scant print gown, heavy shoes, and a print sun-bonnet that came far over her face, giving her countenance the appearance of being hidden within a cavern.

All this Mr. Wilmer observed while the woman received Mrs. Barrat's embraces. An instant later Mrs. Garson released herself, took from her boat a long string of freshly caught fish, and approached Mr. Wilmer.

"This is the gentleman I spoke of, cousin," said Mrs. Barrat, following her relative. "Mr. Wilmer, Mrs. Garson. Mr. Wilmer's niece is asleep in the carriage."

Mrs. Garson pushed back her bonnet and surveyed the gentleman narrowly as she gave him her hand.

There was something about her, despite the difference in their personal appearance, an indefinable resemblance to Therwell, and especially in his most sinister points. Mr. Wilmer felt as one that he could trust her to assist him in his nefarious projects, provided their relations were established upon a satisfactory basis. That they should be so established, and immediately, he determined.

Apparently satisfied with her scrutiny, Mrs. Garson produced a key and unlocked the carriage-gate.

"You can drive in," she said, briefly, in a voice in consonance with her face. "There is the key of the stable at the back of the garden."

She gave him the key and passed into the garden, proceeding to the house. With another key she unlocked the front door, and admitted herself and her cousin to the interior of the dwelling.

It was pleasant within than without. The hall-floor was covered with matting, as was also that of the parlour, the door of which was ajar. At the back of the hall was a kitchen, and Mrs. Garson entered it at once. It was an exquisitely neat little room looking towards the sea, and was fitted up with dressers which were covered with the brightest of tin and pewter articles, and displayed also a small store of well-kept silver.

"I suppose you are hungry, Jane," said the mistress of the little domain. "I will get dinner for you while you see to your rooms. They are all ready for you. The north-east room that looks out on the sea is for your young lady. Make yourself at home."

Mrs. Barrat proceeded to obey the injunction. She removed her bonnet and shawl and then wandered into the parlour, which she mentally pronounced habitable. As she returned to the hall Mr. Wilmer made his appearance, bearing his niece in his arms.

"Bring her upstairs!" said Mrs. Barrat. "We may as well put her in her own room at once."

She led the way up to the chamber that had been

designated as Adah's, and Mr. Wilmer followed, panting beneath his burden, which he was only too glad to deposit upon a couch. It was a sunny little room, hung with bright chintz curtains and furnished with a crimson carpet, a low neat bed, an easy-chair, a few books, a vase or two, and a chintz-draped couch. There were several engravings on the white-washed walls, and there was an evident attempt to achieve an air of elegance throughout the small apartment. The effect was slightly marred by the fact that the windows were nailed down and their lower halves covered with stout wire netting.

"How pleasant it is here!" said Mr. Wilmer, looking around him. "Who could have expected to find such a pretty room here?"

"This is Maria's brother's room, when he visits here," answered Mrs. Barrat, who had been examining the books and trinkets. "Vincent Therwell likes nothing that is ugly. I suppose that room adjoining is intended for me!"

She hastened to examine it. It had not the pleasant prospect of the outer room, its one window looking into the back garden, but it was very comfortable, and the ex-governess professed herself satisfied with it.

Returning to the outer room, she removed the bonnet of the still unconscious Lady Chellis, drew off her cumbersome cloak, and placed a pillow under her head.

"She will soon recover," she said, listening to the young bride's breathing. "She ought to be alone when she comes to her senses. Come!"

The confederates retired from the apartment, locking both doors behind them, and then proceeded to look at Mr. Wilmer's room, which was exactly opposite to that of his niece, a narrow hallway intervening. It proved to be both comfortable and pleasant, and, well satisfied with their new quarters, the worthy couple went down to the parlour, where they remained until summoned by Mrs. Garson to breakfast.

It was a neat little repast she served to them, of new-laid eggs, fried fish, fresh bread, butter, and roasted potatoes. The travellers had appetites to enjoy it, and their hostess's stern features relaxed as she noticed how heartily they partook of the fare.

"Will Miss Wilmer have her breakfast now?" she asked.

"Not yet. She is asleep. I will take it up to her when she requires it," answered Mrs. Barrat.

"She is insane, you say?" asked the hostess, with a keen, furtive glance at the face of her guests—a glance wonderfully like that of her brother.

"Yes, she is unfortunately insane," said Mr. Wilmer. "I have hopes that the sea-air will cure her. Mrs. Barrat will attend upon her, and I shall also remain to watch over her. You have but to name your own price, Mrs. Garson, for your rooms and services during our stay. I know we can rely upon your thorough discretion, and that our affairs will be kept secret."

"I would do almost anything for money," said his hostess, grimly.

"Then we shall agree perfectly," was the brisk reply.

"Suppose we say thirty pounds a week for your board during your stay," remarked Mrs. Garson—"ten pounds each, you know, and ten pounds a week additional for the care of your horses. Then, a little present of fifty pounds when you go away would not be amiss. Upon these terms I would agree to keep even my own brother away from here. I live all alone, you know, and am my own servant. I think," she added, slowly and significantly, as Mr. Wilmer hesitated, "that, upon the terms I have mentioned, I should not trouble myself to investigate the insanity of the young lady upstairs. In short, it would make no difference to me whether she were insane or not."

"Very well, then," exclaimed Mr. Wilmer, well pleased at this declaration. "It is agreed, then. There is the first instalment of your pay," and he tossed a purse into her lap. "If I succeed in my plans—that is," he added, correcting himself, "if my niece should recover you may receive even a better present than you have stipulated for."

Mrs. Garson's eyes gleamed suddenly and a grateful look overspread her face. She looked over the contents of the purse, then put it in her pocket, and declared that she would be faithful to the interests of her employer.

"By this time Miss Wilmer must be awake," said the ex-governess. "I will take up her dinner, Maria."

Mrs. Garson arose and produced from a tin oven in front of the fire the dinner she had prepared for the prisoner. A tray was covered with a fine damask napkin, a china plate was put upon it, and dishes were grouped around, containing eggs, fresh

fish, toast, and a quivering lump of ruddy jelly. A small pot of tea and bowl of sugar were added, and the tray was given into Mrs. Barrat's hands.

"I don't know but bread and water would be more suitable for her," said the ex-governess, "but we can adopt that regimen at any time when it may be necessary."

She hastened upstairs with the tray, unlocked the door, and entered Lady Chellis's room.

The prisoner was still lying upon the couch, but her position was changed. She was evidently upon the point of awakening, and Mrs. Barrat set down the tray upon a table and retreated into the back-ground.

Adah stirred uneasily, stretched out one hand, yawned, and then opened her eyes. For a moment she looked vacantly at the walls, without observing that they were not these of her own room, then the conviction burst upon her that she had not seen them before. She started wildly, sprang up, looked around her, and then her countenance fell upon the face of her former jailer.

In an instant the remembrance of the scene upon which she had closed her eyes came across her, and a realization of her present position passed over her mind. With a wild and bitter cry, she sank back upon the couch.

"You know that you are not at home now, Miss Adah," said the ex-governess, her tones thrilling with the triumph of a petty and ignoble soul. "The other day you were mistress of my destiny and that of your uncle. To-day we are mistress of yours. You are no longer the free and happy possessor of an immense fortune. You are a prisoner, and in our hands."

Again Lady Chellis moaned. But only for a moment did she permit her exulting foe to gloat over her anguish. Bewildered as she was, but half-awakened, knowing nothing of her situation, unable to comprehend the sudden change in her fortunes, she yet, with a mighty effort, strove to calm herself and to regain her self-possession.

"I am not at Montreux?" she said, with another glance around the room.

"Not within eighty or a hundred miles of it."

Lady Chellis passed her hand over her forehead, as if to recall her thinking faculties.

"I remember seeing Mr. Wilmer before I fell asleep," she said. "He drugged me, I suppose, and carried me out of the house?"

The ex-governess bowed assent.

"And he has brought me a hundred miles from home? Where am I now?"

"That I am not at liberty to tell you," said Mrs. Barrat, with a disagreeable smile. "You can make any discoveries which you may be enabled to do, or you can question your uncle. He is the arbiter of your fate."

A sudden flush leaped up into the clear, dark cheeks of the captive bride. A sudden indignant light, like a flash of lightning through a gloomy sky, darted into her eyes—a scornful smile quivered her lovely lips, imbuing them with the vivid hue of the carnation.

"I acknowledge no one but myself as the arbiter of my fate," she said, and her voice rang forth clearly and richly, like the tones of a silver bell, through the little room. "Mr. Wilmer has succeeded in stealing me from my home, but he cannot break my will to him. You may tell him so. And tell him, too, that, imprisoned as long as he may now, he cannot place himself in his former position. He may report that I am insane, but if I were he would not gain one penny by my misfortune. And tell him," she added, impressively, "if I die here, it is not he who will benefit by my death. Sir Hugh Chellis will be my lawful heir."

"Why not tell him all this yourself, Miss Adah?" replied her jailer. "Your uncle is coming up to see you soon. You had better eat your breakfast, for you must feel weak after your long stupor. I will leave you to yourself."

Adah inclined her head haughtily and the widow withdrew.

On being left alone the young bride again arose and essayed to cross the floor to the window, but her brain reeled, a veil seemed drawn over her vision, and jarring tones sounded in her ears. She felt faint, weak and ill, from the reaction of the powerful drug under which her senses had lain dormant so long.

"Am I going to be ill?" she murmured, with a sudden sensation of fear. "Ill, and far away from home, among deadly enemies! Oh, Aunt Dorothy, Captain Heddell—Hugh!"

She faltered the last name, her voice dying away in a faint murmur.

"It must be that I am still suffering from that drug," she thought. "If so perhaps I can throw aside its effects. Surely they would not poison my food!"

Actuated by the instinct of self-preservation rather

than that of hunger, she reached the little table, and poured out a cup of strong tea. Her first sip of the fragrant beverage was grateful to her fevered palate, and as she drank eagerly the fever mists cleared away from her brain, her vision became perfect, and she was herself again. She had no desire to assist her enemies in making a martyr of her, so she ate a little, and soon arose considerably strengthened and refreshed.

Her first movement was to look from the windows.

Her astonishment may well be imagined at beholding the wide expanse of sea spread before her gaze reaching almost up to the dwelling, its soft cooing murmur, as it lapped the shingly beach, sounding like sweet and gentle music. She gazed seaward, noticing the two or three distant fisher's sails, and then glanced at the barren rocky shore.

"How solitary and desolate it all looks!" she murmured.

In vain she looked from each of the three windows, two of which only turned towards the sea, for some dwelling, whether mansion or hut. Not a human habitation met her gaze. Nothing was to be seen except on the one hand a meadow, where only the rankest of vegetation grew, and even that was choked up with great shining patches of white sand in many places, and on the other the glittering sea, whose music now took, as it seemed to her, a strangely mocking tone.

"There is no hope of help for me from without!" she sighed. "Hugh could never find me here, even if he were to look for me. But he will not look. I sent him away, and even now he may be on his way to the Continent. And dear Aunt Dorothy and Captain Heddell might search for ages for me without finding my hiding-place. I have myself no idea where I am."

She walked across the floor once or twice restlessly, opened the books, hoping to obtain some clue to their owner, and then looked out of the window again. Her bewildered mind puzzled itself to discover some motive for her abduction, and she regarded the subject in every possible light without being able to satisfy herself.

"Yes," she mused, "if Mr. Wilmer has brought me here to die, it is Sir Hugh and not he who would benefit by my death. He cannot have any hope of being allowed to manage my property. He cannot have shut me up here on the plea of insanity without an object. I am positive that this is a private house and not a lunatic asylum. I can find but one reason for his conduct, and that seems but half-plausible. Can he have shut me up here for revenge?"

She asked herself the question in a hollow whisper. And while the sound yet lingered on her lips Mr. Wilmer's step was heard in the passage, and the key grated in the lock of her door.

(To be continued.)

Mr. T. L. PLANT has published the following table, from nineteen years' observations, showing the earliest and latest dates on which the foliage or blossom of various trees has commenced expanding, compared with the same observations in 1867:

	Earliest	Latest	1867.
Balsam Poplar ( <i>Populus balsamifera</i> )	March 6	April 19	April 15
Larch ( <i>Abies Laricina</i> )	March 21	April 14	April 14
Horse Chestnut ( <i>Æsculus Hippocastanum</i> )	March 17	April 19	April 19
Sycamore ( <i>Acer Pseudo-platanus</i> )	March 28	April 23	April 25
Damson blossom ( <i>Prunus domestica</i> )	March 28	May 13	April 17
Lime ( <i>Tilia europæa</i> )	April 6	May 2	April 30
Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )	April 13	May 7	May 1
Spanish Chestnut ( <i>Castanea vesca</i> )	April 20	May 20	May 4
Oak ( <i>Quercus robur</i> )	April 10	May 26	May 3
Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )	May 13	June 14	May 16
Mulberry ( <i>Morus nigra</i> )	May 13	June 23	May 16

GROWTH OF PEACHES AT PARIS.—The peach is grown to great perfection, and chiefly for the Paris market, at Montreuil, a few miles east of Paris. Near that town a large surface of land is netted over with white walls, enclosing small squares of ground, and against those walls the peach-trees are trained. Some of the gardens are very interesting, and exhibit specimens trained in a singularly perfect and beautiful manner. The celebrated Napoleon peach-tree is one of them, and is an interesting example of their complete mastery of the tree. It is simply a single specimen trained so as to figure the name "Napoleon" very largely on a white wall, one branch going to form each letter. Two great shoots are trained around the letters so as to enclose them with a border. The tree bears a capital crop, and is an excellent example of what may be done by skillful training. There are many other shapes, some of them equally interesting, but of course these curiosities in training are more for ornament than use, though they

bear as well as the simpler and more natural shaped. The soil is a calcareous loam, but there is nothing either in the soil or climate of the place which is so effective as the special and careful training and culture, and undoubtedly quite as good a result might be produced with this best of our open-air fruits in the warmer and more genial parts of England and Ireland.

#### A COUNTESS ON LOVE OF FINERY.

At a recent school examination at Wighton the Countess Waldegrave delivered a short address. She said:

"I wish to speak to the females present, especially mothers. There is a subject which I believe a great many will join with me in thinking important in these times in which we live, and that is the subject of female dress in all ranks of life, but especially among those who attend our schools. I regret to say that there is a great deal of what may be called useless finery among the young girls of the present day, and I should think that probably mothers are a little to blame in that particular. I have observed this passion to be on the increase during all my life; and as God's mercy has spared me through eighty years I think I may speak from experience on the subject."

"I must say I think it a great mistake on the part of mothers to dress their children to the utmost extent of their means, instead of inducing them to lay by their pence for what is called a rainy day, or to collect clothing for winter; in place of which they allow their girls to spend all their little money, and what they can add of their own as well, on what I should call unnecessary and useless finery. I am very glad to find that you educate the children well here, and I am delighted to see that needlework is made a very particular point of examination in most of the schools; because, in seeking for female servants, we all want those who can be useful in those particulars, as well as in knitting and darning, for which I have had pleasure in giving prizes in my own country on various occasions."

"Now, while children are taught to spend all the money they can get together on little bits of finery the first thing a mistress has to teach a young servant is to dress neatly and properly and respectably, and thus correct a great mistake of mothers who help their children forward in unnecessary outside clothing, while very often, I regret to say, the inside is exceedingly deficient. I therefore hope that mothers who have such opportunities of having their daughters educated—and you have many compared to those enjoyed in my part of the country—will earnestly strive to give them that degree of propriety and neatness in their dress which is always respectable, useful, and efficient."

"I trust you will excuse me, coming such a distance as I do, for making mention of what many, if they would speak out, really feel in their hearts. I am often told by mothers, 'Well, ma'am, I can't help it. My girl will go to the second-hand shop and get these bits of things, where they are cheap. And it is only a penny flower, and a flower does not wear out so soon as a ribbon.' Well, but that is not neat, nor is it desirable; and when they get into service most mistresses will object to that kind of finery which is not suitable to the station in which it has pleased God to place them."

"I hope my female friends will excuse me for giving them these hints, for they are the result of long experience."

SILK CULTURE.—Some years ago a gentleman introduced the silkworm into San José, California. The experiment has proved so successful that there are now over 400 silk-plantations in the State, and it is confidently expected that in a few years California will be able to rival, and perhaps undersell, the French market.

CULTIVATION OF FRENCH TOBACCO.—Besides Algeria fifteen departments of France are authorized to cultivate tobacco, namely, the Alpes Maritimes, Bouches du Rhone, Dordogne, Gironde, Ile et Vilaine, Lot, Lot et Garonne, Meurthe, Moselle, Nord, Pas de Calais, Bas Rhin, Haut Rhin, Haute Saône, and Haute Savoie. The annual produce is from 20 to 21 millions of kilogrammes, in addition to 3,400,000 from Algeria.

THE COST OF TEA.—A pound of tea of the cheapest description costs in the district in which it is grown in China 5d.; by the time it reaches Kiatch, on the Russian frontier, it costs 11d.; and on reaching Moscow it costs 2s. 2d. A pound of the same description of tea conveyed by sea from Canton to St. Petersburg via London, and thence by rail to Moscow, costs 1s. 8½d.; if conveyed direct from China to Hamburg, and thence to St. Petersburg and Moscow, it costs but 1s. 5½d.





[PENTON'S MEETING WITH OPAL.]

## SWEET ROSES YANGLED.

### CHAPTER XLIII.

MR. MATSON placed Rosa in the vehicle, which in a few moments was rapidly driven through the street and across the stone arch that spans the stream which intersects a portion of the town. After making several turns the carriage drew up in front of a handsome dwelling, with a row of poplar-trees in front.

A small green lawn, enclosed by iron palings, was divided in the centre by a flight of stone steps that led to the door, on which was a lion's head of brass highly polished.

Mr. Matson dismissed the carriage, with orders to the driver to return in two hours, mounted the steps with Rosa, and struck a loud peal on the old-fashioned knocker.

This was responded to by a servant, who ushered them into a lighted parlour in which a fire was blazing brightly. The room was untenanted, but they had scarcely sat down when the door opening into an adjoining apartment was unclosed, and a slender, graceful-looking woman, evidently in delicate health, entered.

Her dress was very plain, but of rich material, and a small lace cap covered her hair, which Rosa noticed was beginning to be streaked with gray.

She cordially extended her hand to Mr. Matson, and said:

"You are welcome, as you always are, Cousin Ned, but I am sorry that Mr. Marsden is not here to see you. It seems an age since we met. I was young then, and now—well, you can see for yourself what changes time has made in me. This is your young friend, I suppose. I am very glad that you brought her with you."

Rosa was actually startled by the first sound of her voice, for its tones seemed an echo of her own. She arose as Mr. Matson replied:

"Thank you for your welcome, Cousin Rosa. Permit me to present to you Miss Rosa Gordon. I have—"

What he might have said farther was cut short by a sudden tremor which seized on Mrs. Marsden, and Mr. Matson hastened to support her and place her on a sofa. She turned her face away from him, and remained several moments apparently in a half-conscious state; but at length, with a strong effort, she raised herself, placed her hand upon her heart, and, with a feeble attempt to smile, said:

"I suffer from extreme oppression on my chest, and sudden fits of faintness seize me when I am least expecting them. My health is not good, as you may perceive from the change in my appearance. Pray excuse me, Miss Gordon, and make yourself as much at home as any friend of my cousin's should in my house. Take off your bonnet, and draw near the fire."

Rosa silently complied with both these requests, while Mrs. Marsden volubly went on to question Mr. Matson about his family.

Rosa critically surveyed her, and she scarcely felt complimented at being thought to resemble her. Mrs. Marsden looked worn and faded, and it was not difficult to see that her life was not a happy or contented one, though she appeared to be surrounded by all the externals of affluence.

The room in which they sat was expensively furnished, but with the severe simplicity of an ascetic taste.

There were no pictures on the walls; no ornaments on the mantelpiece; no elegant trifles designed to while away the time of visitors, were found upon the tables, and Rosa remembered that Mrs. Hawks had said her early friend had married a man of very strict religious notions. So he ruled the wife he had taken from obscurity, she thought, and his taste dictated the furnishing of her house, and the adornment of her person, for the young visitor observed that not a jewel gleamed amid the rich attire of Mrs. Marsden, except a small gold pin that fastened her collar, in the centre of which a tiny brilliant sparkled.

She did not even wear a wedding-ring, and Rosa smiled half contemptuously at the state of vassalage into which her hostess had fallen, and wondered if any man breathing could reduce her to a similar condition.

She thought not, and I quite agree with her. She was not made of yielding materials, and he who attempted to put a curb on her would surely come to grief by the experiment.

Mrs. Marsden at length turned to Rosa, though it was evidently with an effort; she seemed to feel that any longer neglect of the stranger within her gates would be remarked by Mr. Matson, and after giving a strange, wavering glance at her face she said:

"The storm last night was a terrible one even on land, and I could not sleep for thinking of those who had gone down to the sea in ships. But you look well, and bright, in spite of all you have gone through."

"I was not much frightened, madam. I felt that

the vessel that bore me upon my way would not founder."

"You must have great faith," murmured the lady.

Rosa laughed:

"Yes—I have great faith in my destiny; that is all, for I do not pretend to be a saint."

Some powerful emotion seemed to shake the frail frame of Mrs. Marsden, as she listened to those words; she became very pale, and again pressed her hand upon her heart.

Her eyes seemed to be fascinated to the face of Rosa, and she looked into the light, defiant orbs raised to hers with a pitiful, questioning glance that would have been painful to a more sensitive person.

But Rosa read nothing of its meaning, and waited for her hostess to break the silence that had fallen upon them.

In low, measured tones, Mrs. Marsden at length asked:

"Does that destiny promise to be so brilliant that even the storms of ocean shrink from quenching its brightness? Tell me, Miss Gordon, for you interest me."

With some bitterness Rosa replied:

"I have youth, hope and strong will, Mrs. Marsden. They are all my dower, and I am now on my way to become a governess in the family of a wealthy gentleman. You will scarcely consider that a very brilliant commencement in life, but the wheel of fortune may yet chance to bring me to the highest round of worldly prosperity. I intend to do my best to gain it, at all events."

A faint flush came across the listener's cheek, and with some effort she asked:

"Were you educated with such a prospect as that held out to you as the result of your studies?"

Rosa coloured in her turn, and rather haughtily replied:

"No, madam. Until I had completed my education I was led to believe from the money lavished upon me that I was an heiress. Then I was informed that I must earn my own bread; I have been doing it for many months past, and I am quite satisfied with the prospect opening before me now."

"And that prospect—what is it? To whom are you going?"

Mr. Matson saw that Rosa was annoyed by these queries and he hastened to interpose, wondering that his cousin's wife should manifest so much interest in the affairs of so utter a stranger as Rosa must be to her. He said:

"I am taking Miss Gordon to become the companion and instructress of William Hastings's

daughter. You knew something of him in days of long yore, I believe, and—"

His words were again cut short by another attack of faintness overpowering his hostess, and this time she lay so long pale and insensible that he began to think of summoning assistance. But Mrs. Marsden held his hand grasped tightly in her own, and when she regained the power of speech she faintly said:

"Do not alarm my children by calling anyone. I am subject to these attacks and always recover from them without any help. I am not strong and it takes very little to overcome me."

"You are changed indeed since I last saw you. What on earth has brought you to such a pass as this, Anna?"

A weary smile flitted over her wan lips, and she replied:

"The will of heaven, I suppose. For several years my health has been failing, and medical skill has not benefited me. The first blow was the death of my children—four of them were snatched from me in a single week by a contagious fever, and only the youngest survived. How I lived through that fearful trial I can scarcely yet understand."

"Yes, I heard of that great affliction," said Mr. Matson, sympathetically; "but I felt that if anyone could bear it with Christian fortitude you and your good husband would."

"Mr. Marsden bore it as he does everything, in stern and silent endurance. But to me—to me it came as a judgment! I know it—I know it!"

The intense passion with which the last words were uttered startled Mr. Matson, and he hastened to say:

"Don't talk so, Anna. You have always been a good woman, a model wife and mother; then why should you believe that a judgment has been sent upon you? People lose their children every day without fancying such a thing."

"Oh, you don't know—you don't know!"

Suddenly recovering her self-possession, Mrs. Marsden raised herself and wearily said:

"Excuse me, Miss Gordon, for referring to such mournful themes in the presence of one who can be expected to take but little interest in the affairs of a passing acquaintance. I will order in some refreshments, and with them will come the two darlings I have left to me. I should like you to see them, and Cousin Ned will be able to take home a description of them."

"By all means," said Mr. Matson. "I was just going to ask for the children."

Mrs. Marsden arose and left the room, and when the door closed Mr. Matson turned to Rosa and said:

"You will hardly believe that my cousin's wife was once a beautiful and captivating woman. But she is a perfect wreck now; her heart was wrung up in her two eldest children, twin daughters of rare loveliness and promise. You see what their loss has brought her to, for I think she grieved over the boys far less than over them. Poor Anna! I scarcely think that my stern, ascetic kinsman was the right husband for her, though he has been very kind to her in his stern way. I forgot to tell her that you knew her old friend Eunice Horton, and I am almost afraid to refer to those times lest it might bring on another attack of faintness. There was something painful connected with the last days of her residence in Mr. Horton's family, for she has always been shy of talking of them."

Rosa drily replied:

"I think it will be best to say nothing about the subject. I will also say to you that I do not wish to discuss Mrs. Hawks, for my acquaintance with her was the most painful episode in my short life."

She did not explain farther, and the entrance of Mrs. Marsden, leading a child on each side, put an end to the conversation between them.

A girl of four and a boy of six years of age came shyly forward to be petted and caressed by the strangers.

A servant followed, bearing a silver waiter, on which were wine, fruit, cake, and sweetmeats.

Little Anna sat demurely on the lap of Mr. Matson, while Walter nestled to his mother's side, and the party gathered round the table on which the refreshments were placed.

Mrs. Marsden spoke of her absent husband, became more animated and self-possessed, and Rosa discerned something of the charm of manner to which Mr. Matson had alluded when describing her. She felt alternately attracted and repelled by her new acquaintance, she could not have explained why, and she felt tempted to refer to Mr. Hastings again, for she thought she possessed the clue to Mrs. Marsden's emotions when his name was mentioned.

But when she looked upon the worn and suffering face, on the shadowy form before her, an unwonted feeling of compassion flled Rosa's heart, and she forbore.

After being duly praised, and as much wine and cake given to them as their mother would allow, the children were kissed and sent to bed, and the conversation flowed on agreeably until the hour of ten.

Then the visitors arose to leave; and, after her bonnet and shawl were on, Mrs. Marsden approached Rosa, and, with her sweetest smile, said:

"I have rarely seen a young person who interested me so deeply on so short an acquaintance as you do, Miss Gordon. Will you promise me that if you should ever need a friend that you will remember that I shall be glad to be of use to you?"

"Oh, thank you a thousand times!" exclaimed Rosa, with animation. "I promise to call upon you, madam, if I should meet with tribulation in place of success in the career before me. But I will anticipate nothing but the best."

She held up her rosy lips to be kissed by the pale woman, who clasped her hand nervously in both her own.

The carriage was in waiting, the last farewells uttered, and the visitors safely posted in it.

We will leave her on her way to the scene of her future exploits, and return to Fenton, who had preceded her but a few weeks.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

GODFREY FENTON drew near his home in a most wretched and uncertain state of mind. The farther he was borne from the more earnest grew his longing to return to her, the deeper grew the dread that he would find it impossible to do so.

When the steamer came in sight of the high land on which the town is built he felt as if it loomed before him as the barrier to every hope in life. On that soil he should find the solution of his destiny, and he shrank from the necessity which brought him there a petitioner to his haughty mother for what he felt almost sure would never be granted.

The nearer he drew to her the more restless did her power over him seem, and when the steamer came before the small cluster of houses under the hill Fenton felt as if he were already beneath the sway of that imperious will which had moulded him to what he was.

The day was beautifully clear, but the cloudless sky, with its transparent depths of ether and the soft, balmy air had no charm for his restless heart. He felt the want of exercise, and, leaving his luggage to be sent to the hotel, he ascended on foot the wooden walk built on one side for the accommodation of pedestrians.

Crossing the wide space on a level with the town, Fenton drew near M—Street in a listless and weary way, far different from his usual light and elastic manner of bearing himself. Approaching him at full speed was an elegant open carriage, drawn by a pair of bays that were the pride of their owner; and within sat two ladies.

The elder of these was a graceful but faded-looking brunette, though she had a slight tinge of rouge upon her cheeks.

There was an air of languid affection about her that might have been attractive to the opposite sex in her youth, but now it seemed insipid and unsuited to her years or the dignity of her position as the mother of the tall, well-grown young lady at her side.

The face of the girl was very fair, and almost colourless, until some thought or emotion sent the blood in a bright glow to her pale cheeks, which flushed and faded alternately in a most unusual yet charming manner.

The clear oval of her face was surrounded by long curls of golden chestnut; her eyes were of that deep violet blue so rarely seen and so exquisite in expression; her mouth was perfect, and the sweet and ingenuous soul that breathed from this charming face was even more attractive than the statuesque beauty of her form.

Her shawl had fallen from one shoulder, revealing a figure more perfectly developed than might have been expected from the extreme youthfulness of her face.

Her eyes fell on Fenton, and she exclaimed: "Mamma, there is Godfrey. Stop the horses, Tom, I must speak to Mr. Fenton."

Obedient to the command, the coachman checked the spirited steeds, and drew up to the kerbstone, near which Fenton had paused on seeing a white handkerchief waved to him from an approaching carriage. The young girl leaned forward, and impulsively extended her hand to him, exclaiming:

"How do you do, Godfrey? Your mother will be so glad to see you again, for she has been pining for your presence more than I can tell you."

Fenton felt something like a galvanic shock as he heard her voice, and looked into her smiling, blushing face.

He hastily said:

"Is it possible? Can two years have wrought such a change, and in place of the child I left in short dresses do I find a young lady—or rather a young queen of beauty and fascination? I declare, Opal, I should scarcely have known you again had I met you anywhere else, for you have marvellously improved."

"Thank you—but you were always a terrible flatterer. Here is mamma with me."

She drew back to allow the elder lady to address him, and she languidly extended her hand as she said:

"I am very glad to see you at home again, Godfrey. Mr. Hastings will be delighted to welcome you back, for he has been very much annoyed by your long absence. You know what an immense favourite you always were with him; in fact, nobody can fill your place."

Fenton shook hands with her, flushed slightly, and then said:

"I am much obliged to him, I am sure, Mrs. Hastings, for his goodness. I shall come to Silvermore as soon as possible after seeing my mother, and I know that I shall make up for lost time now that I see what an attraction your home possesses."

He glanced significantly at Opal, who was sensitively regarding him, and he was surprised and amused to see her rosy lips form themselves into a decided curl at his speech. That was one of her childish tricks which he thought she would have laid aside with her short frocks, but there was something piquant in her thus renewing the old familiarity upon the first moment of meeting.

The horses were impatiently pawing the earth, irritated at the restraint put upon them, and Mrs. Hastings said, in her indolent way:

"We shall look for you at Silvermore at the earliest possible moment, Godfrey. Your mother has been very ill, but she is better again, and will be able to spare you. If you will excuse us from parting in so abrupt a manner from so old a friend I will order the driver to proceed. I am a little afraid of these horses, for they are a new purchase of ours."

"And fine animals they are," replied Fenton, drawing back and touching his hat. "Thanks for your invitation, Mrs. Hastings; I shall be sure to make my appearance at your house as soon as my mother will permit me to leave her side. Au revoir."

The carriage passed on, and Fenton stood looking after it a few moments in a state of pleasant bewilderment. Opal Hastings, in the freshness of her young beauty, had dazzled him for the moment, and he thought:

"It would not be a bad thing after all to claim such a sweet creature as that as my own, with a dower a princess might envy. If my mother prove inexorable, I suppose that I must submit to my fate with the best grace possible. But, good heavens! of what baseness am I dreaming? Inez—Inez, you alone are to me the embodiment of all that is charming and adorable in woman. This fair child can only attract me for a moment, but you hold me bound to you by bonds stronger than any she can ever forge."

He hurried forward till he reached the principal hotel, where he was greeted by many familiar voices with a welcome so cordial, which he was glad to meet in the haunts of his boyhood and youth.

A tall, fair young man, who had been one of his classmates at college, said to him:

"I am delighted to see you back at last, Godfrey. You must dine with me here, and I will drive you out home in my cab. Your mother's place lies in my way, you know, and we can have a good talk on the road."

"Thank you, Wallis. I will accept both invitations, though I think it likely I shall find someone here, as my mother is expecting me."

"I saw Mr. Markland's coachman here this morning, and I think it is likely he is here now. He can look after your luggage, and save you any farther trouble about it. Ah, here he comes."

An elderly man with beaming face greeted his young master.

"You have come at last, Mr. Godfrey."

Fenton shook hands with him, spoke a few cordial words to the retainer of his family, and then he informed him of the arrangement he had just made. The man took his directions about his luggage and moved away.

The dinner-bell was ringing, and the two young men went in together to the table.

Wine and cigars followed the repast, and the sun was declining rapidly when they took their places in the stylish-looking cabriolet belonging to Wallis with his brother.

A lad in livery mounted behind, and they drove through the town, taking several turns before they gained the Woodville Road, which winds through the beautiful undulating country.



It was a beautiful spot. The houses lay secluded among trees, occasionally affording glimpses of white walls and terraces through the dense foliage.

The road in many places was bordered by hedges, interspersed with the wild rose and honeysuckle, most luxuriant in growth.

The magnolia grandiflora raised its stately shafts amid the other trees as proudly as the king of the forest should, and the deep green of its polished leaves contrasted with the gorgeous autumn foliage, which had not yet fallen.

After exhausting other topics of interest Wallis said, with a gay laugh:

"I saw you speaking to Mrs. Hastings and her daughter. Isn't Opal a divine creature? I only wish I were in your place, old fellow, for we are given to understand that making love to her is tabooed. You are to be the lucky man, report says, though if I chose to tell tales of you about that fascinating music-teacher in Newhaven I might make mischief, eh?"

Fenton was annoyed at this speech, and he colored slightly as he replied:

"I could easily put that all straight. Miss Gordon was nothing to me beyond a pretty and piquant girl, with whom it was pleasant to flirt. Opal has improved wonderfully; she has developed into a most charming young lady; but I should be sorry to have her debased from the privilege of having other admirers on account of such pretensions as I may have. There has long been a family understanding that we are to marry each other, but neither she nor I was yet raised it. In all probability it will come to nothing."

Wallis turned his attention from his spirited steed a moment to survey the face of the speaker.

"By Jove!" he cried, "that is the coolest speech I have heard for some time, considering that the young lady in question is a beauty and an heiress. What will *la belle mère* say to such indifference on your part? She has already heard something of that little flirtation of yours, to which you seem now to attach no importance."

"There is no seeming about it. Rosa Gordon is no more to me than any other woman, and it is to her you refer, I presume."

"Well—yes—for I thought you were in earnest there. You are a regular heart-breaker, Fenton, for I have known you to make more than one romantic young lady believe that you only lived in her smiles. It will be lucky for the sex when you really become a Benedict; for if Opal really takes after her mother she will not let you be sunning yourself in the eyes of other beauties when you are her lawful property. Mrs. Hastings is as jealous as a Turk, and as imperious, too, I fancy."

"A pleasant prospect to look forward to, truly," replied Fenton, with a constrained laugh. "But if I should marry Mrs. Hastings's daughter, of which there is little probability at present, she must forget the lessons learned from her mother's example, for I do not intend to be ruled by my wife. I would drown or shoot myself rather than submit to be treated as Mr. Hastings is. But as his wife had all the money I suppose he can't help himself."

"No. That is where the shoe pinches. But he's a fine old fellow in spite of his submission to the moneyed power. I don't know a more hospitable or agreeable host than your future papa-in-law; for of course you'll fall in love with Opal as everybody does, and end by making your mother's heart glad by accepting the bride so long intended for you."

"We will talk no more on that subject, if you please, Wallis. Miss Hastings is yet a school-girl, and until she is eighteen there will be no question of marriage. I did not come hither to make love to Opal, I assure you, but only to visit my mother, who wrote to me saying that she was ill."

"Yes, Mrs. Markland has been much indisposed, but she has recovered. I saw her out a few days ago, and she was looking about as usual. Here we are at the turning. I will drive down to the gate and leave you there, as I will not intrude at the first meeting between yourself and your mother."

"Don't take that trouble, my dear fellow. Put me down here. I prefer walking to the house. Come to-morrow, and remember that I shall always be glad to see you."

"Of course I shall come, for that pretty sister of yours is bedding into a most fascinating little gipsy. She will almost rival the fair Opal one of these days."

"I shall not allow you to turn Doris's head with flatteries, mind that, Wallis, for she is scarcely fourteen yet."

"As if a pretty girl with a magnificent dowry isn't bound to have her head turned. But I promise to be discreet."

He drew up at the entrance to a long avenue, hemmed in by high hedges, on each side of which were fields.

Bidding Wallis adieu, Fenton walked forward, at

first rapidly, but he soon slackened his pace, and moved leisurely towards a belt of woodland, in the centre of which his home stood.

Passing beneath the shadows of the trees, he came to a carefully trimmed hedge which enclosed a garden laid off in angles, crescents, and hearts, furnished with every variety of flowering plant that would flourish beneath a genial sky.

Many late roses and chrysanthemums were still in bloom, and every portion of the parterre was in the neatest order.

No dead leaves were permitted to litter the winding walks, and the birds built their nests undisturbed amid the taller shrubs.

The dwelling was a long, old-fashioned house, with a terrace extending its whole length, the roof of which was supported on heavy Doric columns.

A flight of wooden steps, painted to imitate stone, led up to it, on each side of which stood a brick column sustaining a stone vase—in each of which a choice plant was growing.

As Fenton approached the house a magnificent Newfoundland dog sprang from some concealed lair with a deep-mouthed bark, which was speedily turned into a joyful whine of recognition as he frisked and curvetted around the young man, making efforts to place his paws upon his shoulders.

This Fenton would not permit, and his cry of "Down, Garlo, down!" brought two young girls upon the terrace—was a dark-eyed slender creature, who had already attained her full height, though but fourteen years of age, and the other two years younger, with the blonde complexion of her half-brother—for these were Doris and Jenny Markland, the daughters of his mother's second marriage.

They both sprang impulsively to meet him, the older one exclaiming:

"Mamma, mamma, here is Godfrey come at last."

The next moment Doris was in his arms, kissing and clinging to him on one side, while Jenny did the same on the other.

He laughingly cried:

"Don't strangle me at once, pets. Leave me some breath with which to greet my mother."

"Oh, yes—mamma has been so anxious about you," said Doris, removing her arm from his neck, and clinging to his hand. "Come in at once, Godfrey; she is in her room, and did not hear me call, or she would have been here by this time. Dear brother, I am so glad to have you home again; it is so long since you went away."

He smiled down on them both most lovingly as he replied:

"It is worth while to go away for a time, to meet such a welcome as this when I return. You have both grown wonderfully; you, Doris, are almost a woman now, and my pretty Jenny is a head taller than when I saw her last."

"Mamma says I shall be as tall, and good-looking for a woman as you are for a man, brother," said the little one, raising herself on tiptoe, for it was the great ambition of her life to be as tall a woman as the mother who was her best ideal of elegance and grace.

"Yes, you will soon outstrip Doris; but she can console herself by remembering that the most precious things are put up in small parcels."

"Thank you, brother; I am glad that somebody appreciates my slight figure and gipsy-looking face. I am my father's child, and mamma naturally thinks the two who resemble herself more attractive than I am."

"I don't know about that, pet; but you remember what *ma chère mère* says that 'each one has her own little charm.'"

By this time they had crossed the terrace and entered a spacious room furnished with sofas and chairs and hung with pictures handsomely framed.

At the farthest end a door opened on to a portico, beyond which lay a spacious lawn, shaded by lofty trees.

Everything about the place was in the most accurate order, and Fenton smiled as he thought that his mother was a martinet in more ways than one.

A door suddenly opened, and a lady looked on at the chattering trio. The next moment Fenton had released himself from his sisters, and clasped his mother in his arms.

Mrs. Markland received the embrace with the dignified composure that was her distinguishing characteristic, for she considered it bad taste to exhibit the emotion she really felt.

(To be continued.)

THE NORTH POLE AS A WINNING-POST!—Who will first reach the North Pole? Britons, Americans, Swedes, or Frenchmen? Hitherto the rivalry has been between Britons and Americans. Now it is to be between Swedes and Frenchmen. The Swedish

expedition has lately been announced, and now it seems that fifty distinguished Frenchmen have sanctioned a similar enterprise. M. Gustave Lambert, of the hydrographic department, proposes to reach the open Polar Sea and the Pole itself by a route never before tried. We hope it is by the warm gulf stream between Iceland and Scandinavia. The project has been well received, and a subscription has been opened. As soon as 600,000 francs are obtained the enterprise will be carried out. Among the fifty names appended to the announcement are those of Elie de Beaumont, Chasseloup Laubat, Michel Chavalier, Drouyn de Lhuys, Guizot, Emile de Girardin, De Quatrefages, Leonce de Lavergne, Leon Say, Alfred Maury, and Milne Edwards. The Emperor has given his full approval to this spirited project. England ought not to give in.

## SCIENCE.

THE velocity of sound propagated through air at the freezing temperature is 1,089 ft. per second, and at 26° deg. Cent. or 78° deg. Fah. 1,140 ft.

A NEW PLANET.—A new planet was discovered by Mr. C. H. F. Peters, of Hamilton College, U.S., on the 6th of July last. This new star is of the eleventh magnitude.

ARTILLERY PRACTICE.—The 15-inch American gun at Shoeburyness, with American powder and American shot, has been defeated by a target which has been repeatedly pierced by an English gun of less than two-thirds its weight, firing shells with a smaller charge of powder.

A LIFE RAFT.—There was lately launched at Liverpool a lifeboat, constructed at the Hamilton Windsor Ironworks, on the principle of the raft which lately crossed the Atlantic. She is called the *Rescue*, and could carry, it is said, 80 persons, besides a crew of 14.

BURNT TALLOW.—Burnt tallow or grease cannot be restored to its original condition. When subjected to high temperatures animal and vegetable fats and oils are completely changed in their characteristics. At a red heat they are converted into inflammable gases.

BALLOON MEDICINE.—Dr. Chereau, the talented contributor to *L'Union Médicale*, alludes, in a very sprightly article, to the exhilarating effects of breathing oxygen in high altitudes. The author of the papers threw out the hint that various affections might be benefited by airy voyages; and M. Chereau takes this occasion of reminding his readers that, as far back as 1784, eight short months after the first ascent of Montgolfier, a candidate for the Montpellier doctor's degree, Lullier Dushé, proposed in his thesis to organize regular balloon ascents for patients likely to be benefited by large inspirations of pure oxygen. Among the affections to be thus treated he names ague, nervous complaints, islema, dropsy, hysteria, catalepsy, epilepsy, &c.

THE ATLANTIC CABLES.—It must have appeared extraordinary to those who have watched the condition of the submarine telegraphic lines connecting Europe with America that while the 1866 cable, which was picked up from the depths of the ocean after it was thought it had been irretrievably lost, has since its junction with America remained intact, that of 1866 has been ruptured twice. The explanation of this, however, is exceedingly simple. It appears that when the shore end of the 1866 cable was being laid from the Great Eastern the vessel was in a fog, and unfortunately this part of the line was laid over a shoal patch, about forty fathoms in depth, so that the icebergs which so constantly occur in that region, reaching, as they often do, to the bottom, cut the cable. The wire has been completely repaired, but it has been resolved upon to raise the shore end of it as soon as possible from its present bed and remove it to a deeper channel. Meanwhile, with a view to more perfect communication between Europe and the United States, the ship *Chiltern*, which had been commissioned by the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, sailed recently with the telegraphic wires, which are to be laid from Placentia, in Newfoundland, to the Island of St. Pierre, on the Gulf of St. Lawrence. She carries 320 miles of wire, which is packed in new water-tight tanks. There is no doubt that until perfect telegraphic communication is established between Europe and the United States in such a manner as to avoid adopting the assistance of the land lines in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland our correspondence will be subjected to the interruptions by which it has been so often retarded during the past year. With a view, however, to temporarily remedying the evil, it is contemplated to establish throughout Nova Scotia a series of land lines from Sydney, via Halifax, to the United States and Canada;

should these fall during the winter, and there is no doubt that they will have to bear the brunt of snow-storms and sustain the weight of superincumbent ice, it will become absolutely necessary to lay submarine lines between Halifax and Boston in 1868. A Franco-American company is, we understand, in course of formation, with the object of laying a submarine cable from Ushant to Boston, so that it will be advisable for us to take such measures as will obviate the necessity of availing ourselves of the new projected line. This is not a subject, however, in which Englishmen alone are interested, the whole world will doubtless have more or less anxiety for its success.

#### VOLCANIC ACTION OF THE MOON.

ONE of the earliest to record the supposed occurrence of volcanic action upon the moon was the elder Herschel. He observed luminous appearances, which he attributed to the presence of active volcanoes on the dark part of the moon's disc. The cause of these (which had been noticed also, but less satisfactorily, by Bianchini and Short) has now been shown to be the greater brilliancy of the light reflected under particular circumstances from our own earth upon the moon.

Schröter, who devoted a large part of his time to the study of the moon, imagined that he had detected signs of change, which, singularly enough, he seems to have been disposed to attribute rather to changes in a lunar atmosphere of small extent than to volcanic action. He was not able to assert positively, however, that appreciable changes had taken place, and it must also be remembered, in estimating the importance to be attached to his observations, that before his time no very satisfactory or complete maps of the moon had been constructed. One observation of his, however, deserves special notice, as will presently appear. In November, 1788, he noted that the place of the crater Linnæus, in the Sea of Serenity, was occupied by a dark spot, instead of appearing, as usual, somewhat brighter than the neighbouring regions.

Since the time of Schröter other observers have been led to suspect the occurrence of change. The Rev. Mr. Webb pointed out in 1865 eight noteworthy instances. Several of these seem easily explained by the well-known effects of difference in telescopic powers, observational skill, keenness of vision, and the like; but there are one or two which seem (now, at any rate) to deserve a closer scrutiny. There is a crater on the moon called Copernicus, which, in a telescope of adequate power, presents a magnificent appearance. There is in existence a beautiful picture of this spot, taken by means of Mörz's great refractor, at the Observatory of the Collegio Romano. We know nothing to which it can be more aptly compared than to an elaborate system of fortification, surrounded by zigzag approaches. The enclosed space exhibits a close approximation to the hexagonal figure. Within this space the walls slope downwards to a plane of an oval figure, over which are distributed several minute mounds, here standing apart, there clustered together. Without the hexagonal space the walls slope more gradually. They are marked by numberless zigzag lines, which we have compared to "approaches," but which in reality represent ridges, not depressions.

Now, on February, 8, 1862, the south-south-west slope of this magnificent crater was seen to be studded with a number of minute craters not seen in Beer & Mädler's map. These seemed to form a continuation of a region crowded with craters between Copernicus and Eratosthenes. And it is singular that this last-named region exhibits a honey-combed appearance, which appears not to have existed in Schröter's time, since it is not recorded in his maps, and could hardly have escaped his persevering scrutiny.

**ASTRONOMY IN THE EAST.**—By way of contrast to the scientific manner in which star-showers are now described in the Western world, the following description, from a Bayrent Arabic journal, of the meteors of November last, will be of interest. It was written by the scholar Solyman Effendi Soohi, one of the learned men of Damascus:—"In this past night the stars began the war from the east to the west, and from the southern to the northern side. They dashed at the pace of fiery steeds and ghouls, so that you could not distinguish Pleiades from the Hyades, from the passing of the meteors across them, and the intensity of the brightness. But you now thought that the two stars in Lee's nose had been dispersed, and the two fishes were eclipsed and immersed, and the spearman of Arcturus had forgotten his spear, and was thinking only of his own safety, and the Adhal was complaining to the bright daughters of Ursa Major about the extent of his wound, and the lofty pole had fallen into the claws of the eagle, and the Hedrah was prostrate, and the face of the night was like a leopard's skin; and, to

sum up all, the heavens looked like a sphere of fire or a gleaming of sparks, excepting that the fire and sparks were harmless, not touching the earth or injuring our safety, as if night's daring horsemen, who continued till morning beating each other in single combat, gave us protection and peace. This I write for his Excellency, our Prince, the Sultan Abdul Aziz Khan. May heaven perpetuate the seat of his government to the end of the world's revolution!"

**METEOROLITE.**—A meteoric stone, weighing 28 lb., has fallen in the parish of Almeley, near the town of Kington, Herefordshire, and scores of people have been flocking from all parts to see it. It fell about midnight during a recent storm, penetrating the ground to the depth of 2 ft. 4 in.

**THE CHASSEPOT MUSKET.**—The French Chassepôt muskets are coming in very fast, and there are now enough in store to arm several divisions, but the men, especially in the line regiments, are very imperfect in handling the new weapon, and, in spite of the extensive drill to which they are subjected, they are not likely to learn its use thoroughly for some time to come.

**MICROSCOPE TESTS.**—To such wonderful perfection has the process of manufacturing test objects for microscopes been carried that M. Nobert, of Griefswald, in Prussia, has engraved lines upon glass so close together that upwards of eighty thousand would go in the space of an English inch. Several series of these lines were engraved upon one slip of glass. By these the defining power of any object-glass could be ascertained. As test objects they are equal to, and even rival, many natural objects which have hitherto been employed for this purpose. The delicate lines on some of the diatomaceæ are separated from each other by the 1-50,000th part of an inch, while the finest lines engraved by M. Nobert are not more than the 1-100,000th part of an inch apart.

**THE EXTRACTION OF BULLETS FROM WOUNDS.**—A very ingenious piece of mechanism for the detection and extraction of bullets in wounds has been devised by Mr. Sylvan de Wilde. The probe, consisting of two steel wires insulated from each other, is connected with an electric horse-shoe magnet and a bell, and when introduced into the wound it touches the bullet, the circle is completed, and the bell rings. The forceps act on the same principle, and are intended, first to detect, then to seize the bullet. They have curved points and not palleis or spoons. The points of the probe are kept sheathed on introduction to the wound, and not uncovered until the supposed bullet is felt. This is effected by means of a sliding tube. Mr. De Wilde's probe is a sensitive artificial finger, which enters deeply into the tissues, and gives the signal at once when it detects the hidden source of mischief below.

### MARGARET OF SCOTLAND.

**MARGARET OF SCOTLAND!** for how else may we call the fair girl who fled from the Norman conquerors and threw herself and her family upon the protection of the generous Scots? How else may we call her, who, though a Saxon maiden bred and born, was the beloved wife of a Scottish king, and the mother of kingly Scottish sons?

Edgar Atheling, the imbecile heir of Edward the Confessor, was bribed by William, the first Norman king, called William the Conqueror, to give up his crown for a mark a day—a sum nearly equal to three silver crowns—which gave rise to the quaint couplet by some sarcastic writer:

Hard usury did the Conqueror pay,  
For one poor crown three crowns a day.

Margaret and Matilda Atheling were the sisters of this feeble scion of royalty; and they, with their brother and the delicate, indolent mother, were now the guests of Malcolm III. of Scotland. Here—kept in queenly state—Lady Atheling expressed no desire to leave the royal mansion of her host. Matilda, pleased with the conquests she was hourly making of the gallant followers of the king, was as happy as her light heart and thoughtless nature permitted; while Edgar, a child in manner, and less than a child in intellect, was well pleased with the homage which the younger courtiers accorded him as the expectant heir of the English throne. This one idea possessed the feeble mind of the youth; yet he was more than willing to while away his time in a situation where everything was lavished upon him that he was capable of enjoying.

Margaret Atheling was a few years younger than Edgar, yet her noble bearing, her firm, determined aspect, and the great soul beaming from her eyes, might have led to the belief that she was many years in advance of her imbecile brother.

Her beauty was undeniable. It was of that lovely Saxon character where the rich blood courses

through a complexion of dazzling fairness—the mingling of the rose and the lily—while the soft brown hair and strongly pencilled eyebrows prevented the charge of insipidity, so fatal to blonde beauties.

A few days tended to trouble Margaret with regard to the manner in which her relatives were receiving the hospitality, which, though grateful to her heart as a temporary affair, became exceedingly wounding to her delicacy when their continued residence bore the aspect of intrusion. She was restless and uneasy, and took no share in the general mirth, into which the others threw their whole souls.

It was useless to remonstrate with Lady Atheling or Matilda. Their natures were not fine enough to perceive how it crushed her spirit to receive obligations. Neither would the proposal to leave the court come with a good grace from the females of the party, when they had a representative—nominal indeed in Edgar. There was but one way, and that was to exert the power which she had always held over the weak and dependant spirit of her brother—the power of a great over a small mind.

It was no light task now, when the childish nature of Edgar—ever caught by shows and spectacles—ever prone to lean to the side of sensual enjoyment—ever willing to give himself up to pleasure and indolence—must resign all this for an uncertain habitation and the prospect of hard fare and solitude, except, indeed, the society of his own family.

At first he was fretful and impatient—then bitter and obstinate—as Margaret sought to entreat, to warn and to reason. Then she rose, in the full majesty of her noble nature, and, fixing her beautiful eyes upon her brother, she said:

"Edgar, I hold it shame thus to be dependant on a foreign power. Well may the usurper of your throne mock at the royal family he has so basely reared from their kingdom, when they sit down content at the feet of a neighbouring monarch. No, Edgar, let us away from here; and, if need be, let us work, even, rather than owe our subsistence to the forced generosity of another."

"But, Margaret, it will not be long," said the youth, passing his long thin fingers carelessly over the light beard which grew but thinly upon his short, feeble chin; "it will be but a few months before I shall be King of England, shall I not? And then," he continued, absently, "Malcolm may be proud to return our visit, with half his court, if he please."

Margaret bit her lip until the blood came. "Oh, that I were a man!" she muttered to herself as she saw Edgar turn away listless and weary of her and her plans, since they interfered with his animal enjoyments; for of mental ones, poor youth, he had no idea.

"Once for all, Edgar," she said, resolutely, "you must propose our departure to the king. Do not let this devolve on me. It is not meet that I should daunt so unmanly; but, truly, if you will not I shall be compelled to do it. Tell him how we value the present obligation, and say that if adverse times come to us again there is no one whose noble heart we should so dearly trust as that of King Malcolm. Will you do this, dear Edgar, for the love of your sister Margaret?"

And the really loving youth clasped her hand, and then, as if ashamed of the emotion he was about to display, assumed a kingly air which seemed painfully ludicrous to Margaret, and said:

"Fair sister, we grant thy request."

Margaret had a still harder task to induce the indolent Lady Atheling and the vain Matilda to forego, one the ease and the other the admiration they enjoyed.

Malcolm of Scotland was pacing the floor of his own private apartment, with steps the unsteady restlessness of which betrayed that the monarch had some matter of deep thought upon his mind. He started when his page announced that the young king—as he was scrupulously called at court—craved admission. Had he known how unwilling a visitor Edgar Atheling was he would scarcely have admitted him. The youth approached him with an air once lordly and servile, so uncertain was he of his own position. With a painful hesitation he gave the object of his mission.

"And you wish to leave me, prince?" asked Malcolm, a shade of disappointment passing over his fine face.

"Certainly not, your majesty! Margaret—"

He stopped from sheer nervousness and embarrassment.

The king walked across the floor once more in deep thoughtfulness. A light broke in upon his mind, and imparted itself to his features. He turned to Edgar, who was blushing deeply at having mentioned his sister's name so inadvertently, and now nervously played with the trimmings of his rich dress. He expressed his regret that his guests should



not honour him still longer with their presence, but signified that their wishes were his law.

Edgar, glad to get through the scene, returned to Margaret with a strangely garbled account of the interview, which somehow left a painful and mortified impression on her mind, and made her still more eager to go away. She passed a trying half-hour with her mother and sister, leaving them both displeased with her, and altogether it was a very unhappy day for more than one.

When Edgar left the king the latter resumed his thoughtful walk.

"I like this maiden delicacy," he said to himself—though speaking aloud, as if to someone else. "What a Queen of England she would make if that lubberly boy were but out of the way! William the Conqueror would not conquer her, I dare swear. But, as she cannot be Queen of England, how would it answer to make her Queen of Scotland instead?"

And Malcolm stopped before the long mirror, that reflected a form that was thoroughly kingly, even to the large head that had gained for him the name of *Cean-mohr*.

He seemed satisfied with the survey, and as he turned away he said, very softly:

"Queen Margaret! Ah, she is indeed a queen already, by nature's own crowning."

Far away, among the heather-crowned fields of Scotland, stood a deserted castle, once used as a fortress.

It was the centre of a lovely prospect, where tall hills reared their crests, and broad leeks and bonny burns met the eye, and where the water-fowl stooped to drink, and then, up and away, soaring in the blue sky; and a long line of coast, where the rocks

Were rough but smiling there.  
The acacia waved her yellow hair,  
Lonely and sweet, nor loved the less  
For flowering in a wilderness.

To this castle, newly repaired and embellished, Malcolm sent a train of servants; and thither, escorted by a chosen band of Scottish soldiers, Lady Atheling and her family went. If Malcolm's guests were cared for at court, it seemed that they were ministered to here by invisible geni—so perfectly was every want anticipated, every luxury supplied.

Instead of lessening the obligations they were under to the monarch, their present residence increased them. Even Edgar, who fancied he was going to prison, found his associates and amusements all doubled; while the fair and delicate Lady Atheling was made to assume such state as would have become the mother of a really reigning king.

Matilda was happy, for the officers of the guard were nobly chosen, and their duties were light enough to leave nearly the whole day in which to devote themselves to the ladies; that is, if more than one could be persuaded to accept their devoirs.

Poor Margaret! She saw nothing in all this but a deeper sense of obligation. Her proud heart swelled as if it would burst to see her mother and sister accept it so eagerly, as if it were their due. From Edgar she expected nothing better. He was susceptible of amusement like a child, was epicurean in his tastes, and loved rich and magnificent clothing.

And as his mind was only of that calibre, by nature, she had nothing to say. But of thinking, reasonable beings, like her mother and sister! Oh, it made her colour come to think of it, until her noble brow was like crimson!

She suffered, too, alone. No one sympathized with her proud and generous nature; for no one knew that at the bottom of the little Saxon maiden's heart there was another remembrance of the Scottish monarch, that made the burden of gratitude too mighty.

She would not own it to herself—but she had lately taken to lonely walks, such as maidens sometimes love better than company. In one of these she had lost her way amid the closely interlacing woods, and, without strength or spirit to retrace her path, she threw herself upon the grass and wept aloud. It was the first time since she was a child that she had given way to tears.

High and noble thoughts, and duties that only men usually perform, had kept her from the weakness of tears, while they had not destroyed a single delicate or feminine impulse. Now, the unwanted tenderness of weeping seethed her into slumber—a dangerous indulgence in the depths of those green woods.

Had she dreamed that a king watched her slumbers? The sweet yet noble expression of her features, as she slept, the soft, murmuring voice in which she spoke a kingly name, might have made one believe so.

The touch of a bearded lip upon her hand, though light as the lightest leaf that had blown to her from the tree under which she lay, awoke her. She started up, her superb hair flowing down over

her figure in rich masses, and Malcolm Cean-mohr stood before her. She dropped upon one knee, and hid her blushing face in her hands. The king raised her.

"Sit by me, Margaret," he said, falling upon a raised seat on the green sod. "You have deserted me—taken away your mother and sister and poor Edgar, only because that little proud heart rebels against receiving favours from Malcolm. Hush, Margaret. I am king here. No matter if I only have the fairies for my court. You have had your way for a while. Let me have mine. The throne of Scotland has no queen, and none shall fill that place unless Margaret Atheling can love its king. What sayest thou, my wood-symph? Wilt thou have him whom men call Malcolm Cean-mohr for thy husband?"

What Margaret answered is not written in the annals of Malcolm's reign; but it is certain that no queen, not even the hapless and beautiful Mary, ever drew so largely upon the enthusiasm and sympathies of the Scottish people. That proud, yet gentle heart "warming to the tartan," and identifying itself with all their interests—that kindness and love which, during thirty years, never ceased, and which lasted even until death, was their stay when their beloved king was taken from them.

But when that time came Margaret herself sank under the double blow. Malcolm and his eldest son fell upon the field of battle in one day. The King of Scotland, incensed at the English nation for exacting homage from the Scots, made war upon England, and besieged the Castle of Alnwick.

On the thirteenth of November, 1098, they fell. On the sixteenth the news was brought to Queen Margaret, who was already worn out with watching and anxiety. She died within the hour. Hear what Sir Walter Scott relates of this beautiful queen:

"She was, after death, received into the Romish calendar of saints. A legend of a well-imagined miracle narrates that when it was proposed to remove the body of the new saint to a tomb of more distinction it was found impossible to lift it until that of her husband had received the same honour; as if, in her state of beatitude, Margaret had been guided by the same feeling of conjugal deference and affection which had regulated this excellent woman's conduct while on earth."

M. A. L.

#### THE SABBATH BELLS.

Oh, there are sacred thoughts which deign to spread  
A holy calm around my silvered brow;  
And long may such my every thought employ,  
To bring me nearer to the realms of joy.

Yon Sabbath bells invite to peace,  
To hope and holy thought;  
There may we find that comfort now  
Our hearts so long have sought.

THERE are circumstances which inspire the human mind with joy, and make the heart yearn for the olive of eternal peace. Some fix their hopes on things not for mortal worship given, and some for the bright gleam of that holy ray which brings them to a true sense of homage in the house of God. The distant chime of the Sabbath bells, the organ's deep and solemn swell, the choral voices mingling and sweetly blending in sublime harmony, lure us from worldly thoughts to these of heavenly bliss. Alas! that ever doubt or fear should break in on such bright dreams as these, to mar that blessing which holy worship brings. But the truly pious heart is not forgetful, for on its spotless tablet joy is traced in lines that never fade, and thrice happy are they whose souls are fraught with holy images. Those Sabbath bells are such as call us in our youth to the first pure lessons of devotion—a duty sacred to the human heart—

Which is not of the world—which all revere,  
Though wealth and honour hold no portion there;  
Dear Sabbath bells, ye speak of joys unknown  
To those who fail to seek sweet mercy's throne.

J. A.

#### KEEPING THE VOW.

##### CHAPTER V.

JOHN HUBERT IVINGTON had bought a house. A handsome house in the suburbs had long been to let, and the owner despairing of getting interest on his property that way had determined to sell it.

John was a man who did not know he had nerves. He liked the place because it was capable of great improvements.

Its situation suited him—far enough from the road to insure quiet—near enough to show with imposing distinctness. He got it at a bargain, too, cash down—serpentine walks, statuary, greenhouses and all. It mattered but little to him that the place

was said to be unlucky; indeed it derived an additional charm in his eyes from that fact. The man who had built it quarrelled with his wife. He was overheard by the neighbours swearing at her about the disposition of certain improvements; he was seen sometimes, when the window blinds were up, to pace wildly about the room as if anxious to find somebody to take up cudgels against; and when his wife was found dead in her bed one morning, although there was no existing proof that evil had been done, the people of Berrylton considered that she had been foully dealt by, and only expressed their wonder that it did not happen before; one morning, some years after, the old man was cut down from a beam in his stable dead.

From that time all the inhabitants considered the house doomed, and whoever moved in soon moved out in disgust, having seen something, or heard something, nobody quite understood what. John had listened gravely when these things were commented upon, and smiled as the widow in the house adjoining answered his questions, with sincere faith in the genuineness of the sights, sounds, or whatever they were, as she handed him the keys every now and then.

John always looked at a younger face when he smiled—the face of that really beautiful girl of seventeen, the widow's only daughter.

"He seems to take a mighty fancy to you," said the widow one day when they had been talking about him.

"I'm sure I hope not; I should not feel at all flattered."

Her mother looked up annoyed. "Why, Angy, he's handsome, he's remarkably handsome."

"So everybody says—and so, indeed, he may be to those who like his style; but there's something beneath it all, something hard and revengeful—at least, so it seems to me."

"Why, daughter," exclaimed the mild widow, "you can't mean it?"

"Indeed I do."

"Then how differently folks see! I thought he looked like a man almost too kind and indulgent; I thought him singularly beautiful. Well, well, there's no accounting for diversities of opinion. Your poor father used to say that I was a very poor judge of character. Perhaps you take after him, for I must say he read men as easily as one reads a book. How nicely he is arranging everything. You can't deny that he has great taste."

Angy joined her mother at the window which overlooked that part of the estate which was under repair. Nearly a score of workmen were busy at various points, some clearing the walks, others trimming trees, others working upon the house front itself.

As Angy stood there, intent on the scene, a very handsome man rode by on horseback, lifting his cap pointedly as he bowed to the two. Angy blushed and drew back.

"He seems determined to keep up the acquaintance," said the widow, smiling in a pleased way. "Well, I don't know why he shouldn't. We're his nearest neighbours, and your father held a high position in the legal world. There was not his equal, I believe; but his heart was so good, poor dear, that he couldn't keep money. Well, well, I hope the poor man may never repent of his bargain."

"It seems everybody has who has ever had anything to do with the gloomy old house. I wouldn't live in it if they gave it to me," said the bright-faced girl, going back to her seat at an opposite window, overlooking her own little flower garden.

"I wouldn't live in it if they gave it to me."

How often in years after would she think of these lightly spoken words, and feel herself powerless to control the fate that seemed even now dawning upon her. Light, careless, happy-hearted, she only saw the future through the sunbeams of her own girlish fancy, which was not quite free from "love's young dream," childish as she was.

"At last," said John Ivington, exultingly, standing on the threshold of his elegant drawing-room, surveying its decorations with a pleased though critical eye. "I couldn't have bought such a property as this with twice the money in any other place in the country. Haunted! nonsense. I'll make it haunted by everything bright and beautiful. I'll haunt it with some of the best statuary. The group of Faith, Hope, and Charity shall stand there. Hum—I'll make it a present to my wife." And he smiled in a quiet, pleased way. "To my wife! Yes, she shall be my wife; her destiny is fixed. Strange that when I went to that old witch in Breslau she should show me that face; but she did, upon my soul she did! They say there's a young man comes here, a pupil of her father's. I know; he is as poor as a church mouse; dark and slightly saturnine in face, enough to give him a 'pleasantly evil' expression, as my friend Hummel says, sometimes;

exactly the man to interest a pretty girl. But he comes in vain; the young lady is bespoken."

He then threw himself down upon a couch, settled his head comfortably upon the cushions, and began to form his plans.

Opposite to him was a large mirror, a fixture in the walls that he allowed to remain, while the artizans worked carefully around it. In this could be seen the long, bright perspective of the handsome apartment, velvets, laces, silks and luxurious upholstery. The flowers on the carpet, the frescoes on the ceiling, the fine pictures, the elaborate workmanship of the imported mantelpiece, the costly ornaments above it, the huge silver-branched candelabras, all were reflected with an artistic minuteness that allowed no tint or shade to escape.

"A pretty girl, a beautiful girl! and by Jove I love her! I love her, and I will have her. Did not the fates decide it at Breslau?"

He was gazing languidly at the mirror, when suddenly he saw a man enter from the farther side of the apartment—still in the mirror—and come slowly towards him.

He would have turned, but he knew in that part of the room there was neither door nor window. Besides, that figure was familiar to him, horribly familiar.

It was that of a man small and spare of stature, of a remarkably benevolent expression, though at that moment the face wore a look of mingled regret and sternness.

Small as it was, and at first it seemed a mere puppet, the features were distinctly marked, and the gray hairs upon the white, benevolent forehead trembled in the slight breeze that seemed stirring.

John Irvington gazed like one fascinated or entranced. He was not conscious of being frightened, though a slight chill made him shiver. He felt more like a man under some spell of curiosity and awe. Then the house was said to be haunted, and yonder was a ghostly mirror.

The thin old man seemed to advance half-way to the centre of the room; then he stood still, and, throwing one arm forward, pointed towards a small misty cloud that could be seen reflected upon the mirror, as if someone had breathed upon it. Slowly evolving, one by one, came the outlines of a ship, then rapidly a tempest gathered.

The surface of the glass seemed one vast ocean, broken with huge waves that reared their monstrous crests, and dashed against the doomed vessel. Evidently the storm was at its height. Crowds of frightened men and women appeared in groups about the decks—sailors sprang frantically from point to point, in obedience to hasty orders, that, with the horrid shrieks of the blast, and the cries and prayers of the death-stricken, made a hideous pandemonium of sound.

Suddenly the ship parted.

Those who could swim battled bravely for life. Boats and pieces of spar, filled with clinging men, women, and children, could be seen in all directions. One immense body of wood held but two, an aged man and a little child.

"We might save the child," cried an old salt as they rode between huge billows; "but not the other. Does she belong to anybody here?"

"It would be madness to attempt it," muttered a young man who sat, white as death, in the stern.

And even at that terrible time he thought of the vast fortune that would be his if that little child sank under the boiling surf.

He forgot his sacred trust, forgot his manhood, and did not cry.

"Save the little one; I am her protector. The debt of gratitude I owe the old man, her father, cannot be repaid."

He held his peace, and suffered the timid and the selfish to have their way.

"It's one of the emigrants," said another. "I remember seeing him in the steerage—the old fiddler. Ha! they are under now!"

"Bear away!" cried the pilot; "there's no time to lose!"

And the young man turned aside his head, guarding his wicked thought, perhaps even daring to excuse himself.

He lived it all over again, and grew deadly faint and chill, sitting there before the haunting mirror. At last he ventured to look round. It was no illusion; there stood the venerable, gentlemanly figure, and though through it could be seen the rich furniture and the opposite wall, still there it was, an accusing presence.

"What am I here for?"

John Irvington had not spoken.

"I am here to remind you of the past, to tell you that you have perjured your soul, but that there is even yet forgiveness for you if you will be just. I was with you when my helpless little child asked for mercy at your hands, and found no mercy in a villain's

heart. This splendour, the money that you lavish upon it, rightly belongs to her. I trusted you; too blindly I followed my own impulses. I believed you as honest as myself. Did I not take you from vicious poverty and make you as my own? Yes, as my son I educated you, gave you access to the best society, bestowed my confidence upon you—and how have you requited me for it all? I tell you, man, I will haunt you to death! In all your pleasures I will be beside you; in the silent night you shall see me, and in the glare of mid-day. They call this house that you have bought with my money haunted. Every place to which you direct your footsteps shall be haunted; every pleasure you enjoy I will poison. I will stand beside your bridal, I will make desolate your household; I will trouble you while living and dying; you shall not escape me, unless you make full restitution. My little innocent child, you have subjected to all the galling restrictions of poverty. You have thrown her amidst the pollutions of a vicious neighbourhood at nearly the same age at which I rescued you. You have tortured a little heart that loved you singly and purely; you have taught it to hate and almost to loathe your kind. Go and find that child, take her home, educate, clothe, and cherish her; I ask nothing more. You may keep her for ever dependant upon your bounty. Hide the secret of her birth, if you will, but for the sake of heaven and your own honour, do not leave her among those terrible influences, where her soul and her purity are in danger! If you fail to do this, I tell you I will haunt this old house as it was never haunted before. Wife and children you may have, but misery shall follow in their footsteps, and in yours. You shall not feel yourself alone in your most secret hours, but in the presence of an accusing spirit. With a hand of ice I will chill your blood, with a breath of fire I will inflame your soul, till between the two tortures you go mad. Throughout my life I was quiet and retiring, but my will was iron and my purpose inflexible, though, thank heaven, both were turned in the direction of good. But I swear to you I will not let the darling of my old age, the one pledge of my only, early love, suffer through you. And the oath is registered in the high courts of heaven."

John Irvington arose, guilty, but not repentant. The thing—what was it but a shadow, after all?

No one could see it but himself—no other person in the world would or could be cognizant of its presence.

Should he, after three years of elegant ease, burden himself with this child? The matter was not to be thought of, not for a moment. The child appeared before him as she looked that night—meagre, thin, ragged, and dirty. He sickened at the recollection; his fastidious taste revolted. Besides, he chose to consider her an impostor. She was seen to go down—the waves had closed over her, and this old man and vagrant wished to make money out of him. Besides, if he took the girl—if indeed she was rightfully the heiress of all this wealth, would not common gratitude exact a support for the blind old fiddler?

The girl would not leave him if he had been her benefactor. Indeed, the whole thing involved so much thought, expense, and trouble that the best way was to wash his hands of it entirely, and let the shadow do its worst; it was, after all, only a shadow.

He rose up to walk across the parlour—a thin hand touched his shoulder, and through broadcloth and lining it felt cold, cold as ice, and sent him thrilling and shivering backwards. In vain he strove to shake it off; like a grip of iron it remained, rooting him to the floor. Every pore of his body exuded moisture, and every drop fell from him like a piece of ice.

In utter agony he opened his lips to say, "I will," when he started to his feet with a look of alarm, gazed down the apartment—and, looking around, saw one of the workmen regarding him curiously.

"I—I was fast asleep, eh?"

"Yes, sir. Excuse me for the liberty, but I wished to consult you previous to going, and shook you by the shoulder I'm afraid rather roughly."

"Oh, no, no—quite right. I'm very glad you did. It awakened me from a troublesome dream. You were quite right. Haunted—ha, ha! by nightmares. Yes, mares that ride in the daytime, sometimes. I imagine that every house is haunted in the same way, eh?"

"No doubt," replied the carpenter, seeing that this confidence warranted freedom. "I've often said I wished they'd give me the house, rent free, to live in; I'd not be afraid of all the ghosts they could raise. It was a queer place, though, when we began the repairs—so many odd nooks and corners. I wonder who had the planning of it?"

"By Jove, though," said the same man, a few moments afterwards (that is, he used a rougher word

than I feel at liberty to transcribe) "you never saw a man so scared as he was when he opened his eyes. I wonder what the chap had been dreaming? His under-jaw looked fallen, and for a minute I was frightened."

## CHAPTER VI.

DESPITE the meagre furniture and cheerless walls, the old room in Bow Court exhibited a Christmas brightness. Flor had found two or three pink and yellow bills setting forth the merits of some long-gone-by amusement, and had pasted them opposite the windows. With the sunshine falling upon them, the great black and red letters seemed like fairy sprites, dressed in their holiday uniform.

"We shall have our turkey, for I am determined to call our chicken a turkey, gran'pa, for the sake of old times. Oh! I remember—"

Suddenly she placed one hand over her mouth, stood breathless a moment, till the old man asked: "Well, little one, what does 'ee remember?"

"Nothing, gran'pa—that is—you see—I think I've forgotten. It don't do me any good, you know, to talk about things that's past and gone; you've told me so yourself—and—"

She had closed her teeth—a look of intense suffering darkened all the face that the poor old sightless eyes could not see—and the little clenched hands aimed impotent blows at the air; then she sank crouching on the floor, with a sudden bitter burst of tears.

Mitty came up in due time with the "turkey," and a fine, plump little "turkey" it was, to be sure. Flor hovered round it, admiringly.

"How nicely it's done! and oh, dear, how brown and beautiful it is! and how large for a chick—I mean a turkey, that is a small one," she added, laughingly.

Mitty Morgan, a short, fat, vulgar, but good-natured woman, who boasted of having seen better times, was Flor's best friend in Bow Court. She it was who, when sober, crawled up into Flor's room after the old fiddler was asleep, and told her some fairy stories, occasionally suiting circumstances to present time and place; and Flor had grown very fond of her, though the child always sat with her face within her hands, for poor Mitty Morgan had degenerated from the high estate. Poor little Flor, who remembered bitterly, never now spoke of the old times.

"So you didn't go to the hotel this morning," she said, as she sat back surveying the bones of the victim she had slain, cooked and eaten.

"Oh yes, I did," said Flor; "but I was late. I didn't like to seem in a hurry, and so the time slipped by. When I went up the girl told me Mrs. Walters was gone to church, and had taken my dear little Red Riding Hood; that she had something nice for me, but had forgotten, and taken away the key of her bedroom. But she told me to come again, and so I promised to go this afternoon. I don't care for what she'll give me," Flor said again, in her pretty, spirited way; but it will be delightful to see them both together—my beautiful lady and my darling little Red Riding Hood."

"Let me see, deary, isn't there anything pretty I can lend 'ee to wear?" queried Mitty Morgan, looking round distressfully. "Ah, ah, if we were only made of gold!"

"And could clip a little piece off," laughed Flor, "every time you wanted, and it would grow again."

"My darling, hand this to the little girl, and tell her it is something mamma and little Florence bought for her."

Flor had not taken her eyes away from the lovely child since she had seated herself at Mrs. Walters' request. Now she started and flushed, and her lip quivered.

"What is the matter with you, my dear?" the lady asked again, noticing a new and singular expression in the face of the child.

"To hear you call her what once my papa called me," cried Flor, the tears starting unwillingly.

"Why, is your name Florence?"

"They call me Flor," said the child, coldly, remembering her vow, and with a resolute effort driving back the tears.

"I had a sister named Florence, and that was my mother's name, too. Won't you tell me something about yourself? Is your mother dead? Are both your parents dead? I have thought some time that perhaps that old man was not related to you, I don't know why."

Flor looked down and was silent, struggling, how hard heaven only knew, to keep her vow—the promise that seemed so binding and so terrible. If she could only tell this sweet, kind heart her sad story. But then if she had this little romance of her life would have stopped here.



"You have nothing to tell me, my dear?"

Flor shook her head.

"Poor thing," thought Mrs. Walters; "her story, likely enough, would be one of misery, exposure, perhaps of sin. Better for us both that she keep silent."

"Well, my dear, you shall take your time about telling me. If ever you feel inclined remember that I am your friend. I have always liked you because of your habitual meanness. Poorly as you have been dressed, your little hands have been clean and white, and your pretty hair always smooth. I have but little money to give, though I live in this great house; but I have time, which is more valuable sometimes than money, and a great deal of patience. I said to myself that I wished to benefit someone, and heaven put you in my mind. I had some thoughts of asking you to come and take care of Pet."

At this the little one smiled like an angel. The tears came again in Flor's eyes.

"Oh, it would be beautiful!" she cried. "Oh, I should like it so much—but gran'pa—" Her voice died away.

"Do you support him, child?"

"Oh, I could do nothing but for his beautiful music. My tambourine only helps a little, but he is blind, and I have taken care of him since—ever since—he saved me—from—drowning."

"And he blind, child? Is it possible? How did he save you?"

"Please, I'd rather not tell," gasped Flor.

This trial was almost too much for her.

"Never mind," said the gentle lady; "some other time, perhaps. Well, here is a nice suit of strong, warm clothes; a little hood that will keep your head warm, and a waterproof cape that will prevent the rain from entering it."

"Oh, thank you—thank you!" cried Flor, with brilliant eyes. She longed to get away somewhere and have a long, childish cry. It seemed as if in no other way could she express her delight. "How good you are!" she said again, with quivering lips. Something in the expression of the child's face touched Mrs. Walters, who bent down and kissed her white forehead.

"And I suppose you don't go to school?" she said, scarcely able to restrain the tears from her own eyes.

Flor shook her head.

"Gran'pa wanted me to go, but who would take care of him? He is too old to leave so long. But I can read all the papers, and I can even write a little."

"If you could spare an hour to come here every day," said Mrs. Walters, "I would teach you to write, and some other things. I can give you books, too."

"Oh, how good you are," Flor exclaimed again.

"Do you think you can?"

"Oh, I must! yes, I knew I can. Gran'pa will be so glad."

"Very well; we'll arrange the hour some other time. You may go now, for I am getting my little Florence ready for a children's party. It's a silly affair, I think; Flor is too little, but Mrs. Beachman would not take a refusal."

"Is it there?" cried Flor.

"Why?" asked Mrs. Walters, glancing up, surprised.

"Because gran'pa is going to play, and I'm to go to take care of him," cried Flor, rapturously.

"Well—indeed—then the new clothes will come in usefully. You have never seen a child's party, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes," cried Flor, eagerly, "I had one myself, when—papa—"

She stopped, confused and frightened.

"I forgot," she said, firmly, looking up in a piteous, appealing manner to the bright face near her; "I must never speak of that."

"Of what, my dear?"

Flor only shook her head, and retreated towards the door.

Mrs. Walters thought it some childish freak, or point of honour, and forbore, with true womanly delicacy, to question her farther. So Flor went home with her clothes, that gran'pa tried his best to see, through her description, and Mitty Mergan came up to dress her, adding here and there a pretty bow of blue ribbon, which she said she had saved from better times.

"I always knew, my dear, that some good fairy would take pity upon you, and make you a little princess at last, a real princess."

"Not the ragged princess of Bow Court," cried Flor. "But they can't call me the ragged princess any longer now, can they?" and she looked at herself admiringly.

"Only when you get your fortune that the good fairy is going to give you, you must not forget me," said Mitty, kissing her.

"No, never," cried Flor, fervently.

What a scene of enchantment for the poor little princess of Bow Court. She sat in a pretty little alcove with the old fiddler, keeping time with her little tambourine, her eyes fastened upon the throng of bright and happy children, decked in holiday attire.

Mrs. Walters came and spoke to her at refreshment time, and that made her supremely happy, but the crowning joy was to hold little Ned, Riding Hood, who had fallen fast asleep, in her arms, while her beautiful lady went upstairs for her shawl and hood; and as little Flor begged to carry the child to the door she was allowed to do so, and, unseen, she imprinted a kiss upon the child's forehead.

When she was gone Flor felt no delight, in the gay scene, and she was glad when at an early hour the party broke up, and she led the old blind fiddler home again.

#### CHAPTER VII.

THE WIDOW COLLINS owned the pretty little cottage next to the Wyllies estate, as the great house had been called in former years, but which the present proprietor, who had a fondness for peculiar names, had christened Willoway. An avenue of beautiful willows extended from the wood to the porch on the one side, so that the name seemed appropriate.

The little cottage was a very pretty set-off to the larger and more pretentious mansion, it was kept so beautifully neat. The old lawyer had spent a great deal of money in ornamenting the grounds, and placing here and there an unpretending piece of statuary, or a marble arbour, or a little grotto of shells. That, and the aid her only son afforded her from an ample salary, supported her in comfort, and provided also for the little wants of the two sisters, Angy and Mary Collins.

Mary was now visiting some relatives; Hal, the brother, only came fortnightly, on Saturday night, and very few visitors presented themselves at Eden Lodge, as Angy laughingly called it.

"You see, Mr. Irvington, it is built exactly where the lodge ought to be," she said, laughingly, to John Irvington, who had called in one evening; "and a house like yours needs such an appendage."

"It needs two or three appendages," said John, meaningly, and then thought how perfectly her face resembled that of the old witch's incantations at Breslau.

It was a pretty, winsome face, seen under the light of the clear stars, and Angy was not at all unaware of her attractions. She glanced up with an arch smile, and down again with a conscious blush, for she read that in the man's face she did not care to see.

She had known him now for two months. Sometimes he came over to bring her a few choice flowers, sometimes to bring a book, or borrow one from her father's library, which still maintained its old place in Eden Lodge, sometimes to proffer a present of fine fruit—and by the widow, who hoped with all her heart that Angy would fancy this rich young man, he was always received with a warm welcome. One evening he looked in at the door, catching sight of the widow's black robes and a portion of Angy's white dress.

"May I come in?" he asked, laughingly. "I'm so dull at Willoway."

"Certainly," said the widow, but there seemed to be an indecision in her voice, perhaps a regret.

He entered; Angy had arisen in some confusion from a seat very near that of a tall, slender, dark-eyed man, and was coming forward.

"I beg pardon—I intrude," exclaimed John Irvington, a shadow clouding his face for a moment.

"Oh, no, Mr. Irvington," said Angy, her woman's tact covering all embarrassment. "I'm very glad you came; we were just wishing some friend would come in were we not Seymour? This is Mr. Seymour Hurst—Mr. John Irvington."

"Oh, we're very glad indeed!" added the widow, perfectly at her ease as the two young men shook hands with great apparent cordiality.

There was something John did not like in the tone of this young man; a peculiar manner, a familiarity that was intensely disagreeable to him. The pleasantly saturnine look, too, he acknowledged was something to fascinate and control. The dark eyes so full of power, massive brow shaded by heavy, curling locks of black hair, the flexible lips, pointed chin and aquiline nose, the ever-varying, sparkling expression of the whole countenance, making it a study. Then and there he took an unconquerable dislike to Mr. Seymour Hurst. To be sure Mr. Hurst understood his position and conducted himself accordingly. He called Angy miss, was fastidiously polite in his attentions, but for all that Mr. Irvington chose to see strong grounds for jealousy

in everything he did. It was hardly to be wondered at, since young Hurst wore his superiority with a modest grace that did him credit. Handsome as John Irvington undoubtedly was, one would scarcely look in his face a second time in the presence of Seymour Hurst. John Irvington was jealous at first sight, and it was hard work to control his feelings during the whole of that memorable evening. The little cottage-plant had never given forth such melodious tones as when it vibrated beneath the touch of Seymour Hurst. His voice too, how rich and expressive. There was little doubt but that he loved Angy Collins—there was no doubt at all when John Irvington heard him sing.

And she—did she love this poor lawyer? this genius working under difficulties and struggling for a competence?

Her eye fell before his, but that was often the case when John Irvington addressed her. Angy was a bit of a coquette, though she would never have acknowledged it. It was very natural, poor child. She could no more help trying to make herself agreeable than she could help loving. She liked to entertain and to please. Perhaps her love of approbation was too largely developed; if so, she paid dearly for it in her after-life.

But in her treatment of this young student there was a deference, a frankness and gentle timidity which to see and admit was gall and wormwood to the impetuous, proud John Irvington. And that night, of all others, Seymour exerted himself. He had heard of this attractive, moneyed man; this man who could live in the midst of splendour and so shine and dazzle—but not on account of the nobleness and greatness of his nature, and he was not going to be thrown into the shade by a man who was merely a millionaire, and presumed upon his wealth. He had, too, a lurking fear that the girl he loved might be lured by this false glitter, and he wished to set before her in startling contrast the merits of the two men.

"I'm rather fatigued," he said, rising from the instrument, and scattering towards the centre table covered with albums and rare books. "Mr. Irvington will entertain you now; you play, do you not?"

"I am sorry to say I know nothing about it," said John, affecting to examine a picture in the volume he had taken up, making a feint to read now and then, but in reality watching Angy. "I might have learned, I suppose, but the fact is, there are so many poor musicians, that it seems a pity to interfere with their chances of earning an honest living."

"I don't see what that has to do with a man's cultivation of his tastes," said Seymour.

"Oh, when I wish for music I pay for it," said Mr. Irvington, falling back in his chair.

"What a vulgar creature!" thought Seymour, and his cheek grew warm. But he was too thoroughly a gentleman to take offence at the implied superiority.

"That's a fine group," he said, a moment after, as Mr. Irvington continued idly to turn the pages.

"I think I must procure that," Mr. Irvington responded.

"The sculptor made me a present of this yesterday," continued Seymour, turning to Angy. "He had but two, and it will be months before any others are out."

"Then you know him?" asked John Irvington.

"He married my sister," was the reply; "and I am happy to say his genius brings him in a great deal of money," he added, quietly.

"What a glorious thing it is to possess genius!" cried Angy, with a burst of enthusiasm.

"Do you really think so?" asked Mr. Seymour Hurst.

"Indeed I do. I would give all the world if I were a genius."

"Or the wife of one," laughed Mr. Irvington, concealing his intense jealousy.

"No, I did not say that," protested Angy, but at that moment her eyes met the luminous orbs of Seymour Hurst fastened upon her.

A burning blush suffused her cheeks, at the same time a new and beautiful expression gave fresh animation to her countenance.

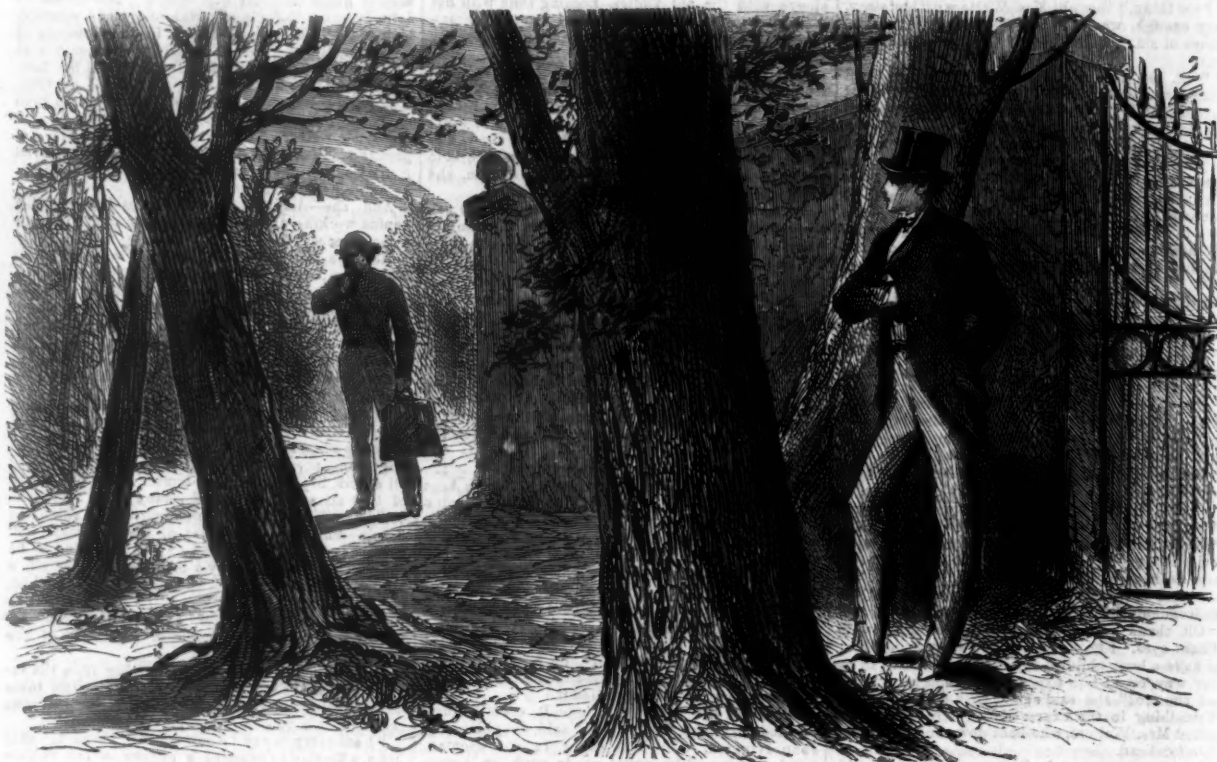
"She loves him—she loves him!" repeated Mr. Irvington to himself, savagely; "but—it was her face, and no other, that I saw at Breslau. She shall be mine."

At that moment they were invited into a pleasant little dining-room, and sat down to a table charmingly arranged.

After supper Seymour started for home; Mr. Irvington walked with him.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

It was a warm night, and the rich man did not care to enter his mansion. Of late he had not rested well. In spite of his will, he invariably awakened at



[THE UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE OF HARRY COLLINS.]

midnight, and the voice he had seen in his dream seemed to follow him.

"I tell you, man, I will haunt you to death."

He never slept without a light in his room, and if by any chance it went out he lay trembling there like a guilty coward, till sometimes it would have been a positive relief if he could have seen some figure gliding across the room.

But though he saw it not all the logic he could bring to bear failed to convince him at times that the spirit was not there.

It was said in former times that when a family moved in some member or members of it were carried out dead before six months had elapsed. Now he had sworn to himself that he would prove the fallacy of this superstition by bringing a bride over the threshold before the expiration of that time; and he was bound to fulfil his oath, because of the face the witch had shown him.

To-night he did not care to go in, for he was by no means happy. The bright eyes and handsome face of Seymour Hurst had made him very uneasy.

"Pshaw!" he soliloquized, "it will be years before he will be able to take care of a wife. In the meantime there is a chance for me, and I'll improve it. I don't know why I should be jealous of this man, but his manner hurt me considerably. How bright the moon is!" he continued, looking cautiously over his shoulder, and up and down the road. "And there's the whistle. Nobody'll stop here to-night of course."

The trees threw fantastic shadows around, which he tried to avoid—he always avoided shadows and darkness if it were possible. A secret, subtle influence seemed to him ever lurking in both, and his conscience made him cowardly. Not that he thought often of the ragged child whose tears and prayers had left him as hard as adamant. It was not the living he feared, but the dead. That awful dream had seemed so real to him.

Suddenly he drew back. A figure exactly like that of Seymour Hurst came rapidly across the road, the head bent low, and almost buried in his breast. He had a carpet-bag in his hand, took long strides, and looked neither to the right nor to the left as he passed John Ivington, of course without seeing him.

"That's very strange," said the latter, half aloud. "Can it be that fellow back again, in the dead of the night, going direct to Eden Lodge too? What does it mean? An elopement or anything of that sort, I wonder? I must see to this."

And he hurried after him. Yes, the man went in

without shutting the gate after him, and seemed to find no difficulty in entering the house. He had a night-key then.

Carefully John Ivington stepped upon the porch, and stood behind one of the slender pillars where he could be quite hidden, if he chose, by the vines that grew around it.

For a brief time there was utter silence. Then he heard someone call out again and again. There was a noise above; the room was lighted so that the beams fell far upon the garden-paving. Then there were steps downstairs, and a great cry—a woman's cry. The shutters only were closed, so that John Ivington could not help hearing distinctly:

"Hal, what is the matter? Are you sick? You're as white as a ghost! Mother, make haste, it is Harry!"

"Come in here, Angy. Is there anyone visiting here?" asked the man.

"No—but what is it, Hal? You have some terrible—terrible tidings. I read it in your face."

"Nothing; only—for heaven's sake don't look at me so—only—without help I'm a ruined man—that's all!"

He spoke with an effort, panting like a wild animal run down by its pursuers.

There was no answer for a moment; then, with something like a moan, Angy called her mother to come quickly. The widow was very much alarmed and ran hurriedly at this last call.

"Harry—my son! what is it that agitates you so?" cried the mother, almost in tears.

"I am ruined, mother. I have lost myself eternally—I have ruined your good name with my own." There was a terrible silence.

"I have forged a paper to the amount of two thousand pounds. The man who lured me to this villany, and whom I trusted, has escaped, and in forty-eight hours it will be known—and—they will be after me. Oh, fool that I was!"

"Hal, this is dreadful!" exclaimed the widow, in an altered voice; "this is dreadful indeed! We couldn't raise one thousand on the house, mortgaged as it is. Oh, it must be some hideous dream! I am not awake—great heaven! my boy that I brought up with such care."

"I know it, mother, I know it," groaned the miserable culprit. "I don't expect any pity or sympathy from you, Angy, or anybody. If I only could get away—great heaven! it is my first sin, will nobody help me?"

"Who can? who will? Who could we expect to help us?" cried the mother, bitterly.

"Surely who? Then ruin must come, but I swear I will kill myself rather than meet it."

This was followed by a stifled scream from both mother and sister.

"Oh, what shall we do?" moaned Angy. "Who could help us? Mother—" There was another short silence—"Mr. Ivington!"

John Ivington's heart throbbed wildly. He saw his way out of the mist he had been creating for himself.

"He is only a friend, Angy. How could we tell him the miserable truth—even if—"

"I would ask him," cried the wretched man, "even on my knees, if only to save you from humiliation—but would he pity me? would he listen to me? These rich men have no pity for the poor and miserable. Shall I go to him to-night—go to the man I have never seen but once? What shall I plead to him for—in whose name? My heaven! I shall go mad."

John Ivington's brain was not idle as he stood there—always ready to retreat into deeper shadow.

"How could you—how could you, Harry?" wailed his mother.

"Don't ask me that; I've nearly become mad asking myself such questions. The evil one tempted me, I suppose; I thought the way was clear to make a fortune. I allowed myself to hope that I should be able to give you and the girls a princely home—my head has been full of such schemes for the last two years, and here is the end of it—a jail in prospect."

"You say it will be known—"

"In forty-eight hours. If to-morrow I should find someone to help me—but the thought is folly—who would pay two thousand pounds for me?"

"I would, willingly, if it ruined me," sobbed his mother, "for the sake of your father's honoured name."

"Don't, don't," cried the young man, in anguish.

"Harry, we must think well of it," said Angy; "go to bed now, and we will contrive some plan. I will ask Mr. Ivington myself; he can but refuse me; and then, if disgrace come, we will bear it. Come—come upstairs now."

"Oh, Angy! I can't rest—I shall die. If I had only foreseen the consequences. Fool, miserable fool!"

John Ivington stepped softly from the portico; the moon was in shadow now, presently it came out, disclosing his face, on which sat a smile of triumph, as he said exultingly to himself:

"I'll make that old witch's prediction in Bresslau come true."

(To be continued.)





[AMYAS AYRE'S REVELATION.]

## AMYAS AYRE.

## CHAPTER XII.

"I SHALL see him in the morning," was Barbara Leighton's last thought ere she slipped into the unconsciousness of slumber. "I shall see him to-day!" was her first waking ejaculation as, roused by the shrill whistle of a train three miles distant, sounding through the silence and quiet of the breaking dawn, she unclosed her eyes, and sprang from her pillow. She glanced at her watch, and hurriedly dressed herself, a little troubled to find that it was later than she intended.

Wrapping a gray shawl around her, and tying over her straw hat a thick brown veil, she noiselessly unclosed her chamber door, and slipped down the stairs as silently as a professional burglar. She was somewhat surprised to find the side door unbolted, but gave no other heed to it than a little indignant anathema against the heedlessness of servants. Had she been a close observer, she might have noticed traces of recent steps on the wet, gravelled walk, blades of grass along the roadside bent down and robbed of their pearly drops by a hasty foot. But she heeded nothing of this.

The dim gray of the sky was tinged with carmine, and at the eastern line of the horizon shone a belt of glowing yellow, like transmuted gold. Sinking downwards, just above the western rim, was the great round moon, looking wan and ghastly beneath the flood of light steadily pouring upwards from the rising ruler of the day. The air was redolent with a thousand subtle and nameless perfumes, and every inspiration that she drew seemed the inhalation of something more vivifying and invigorating than the common atmosphere.

Barbara Leighton, little gifted as she was with the power to recognize and enjoy the wondrous, enchanting spells of nature, was yet vaguely impressed with the vigour, freshness, and beauty of all things around her, and marvelled not that the birds, from every hedge and tree-top, seemed half intoxicated with delight as they carolled forth their morning songs.

She had a dim consciousness, likewise, that many sweet and beautiful sources of inspiration and enjoyment were wilfully repressed by those who chose to lie sluggishly upon their morning pillow. But those dreamy thoughts soon faded away beneath the excitement of her emotions as she neared the river, for, in the distance, she saw a figure she recognized full well, walking swiftly along the bank.

Unmindful of the dripping dew, which her dress swept from the grass, Barbara Leighton ran across the meadow, shining like a robe of emerald velvet bespangled with crystal, and encountered the startled face of Amyas Ayre as he emerged from the little grove on the slope above the cottage.

He started back, instinctively holding out his hands to ward her off.

"Barbara! Miss Leighton!" exclaimed he, in a tone of keen surprise and no little annoyance.

Miss Leighton pulled off the disfiguring veil, and turned upon him her beautiful, triumphant, glowing face.

"Oh, Amyas Ayre!" cried she, "did you think I would accept that terrible farewell from you? Who instigated you to such cruel words? They were not your own devising. I am sure they were not."

"You are mistaken," answered he, looking around him as if he longed for an avenue of escape.

"And were you willing to wound my heart so cruelly? Oh, Amyas, I would never have believed it!" remonstrated Barbara, in tones of winning tenderness, the shawl dropping from her symmetrical shoulders as she clasped her hands and assumed an attitude of exquisite grace.

The artist's face was full of trouble and embarrassment as he faltered:

"I wish you had spared me this, Miss Leighton. What is inexorable is beyond anyone's help."

Barbara bit her lip nervously. There was an expression on his face which startled her. Was it indifference? or, even worse, was it contempt? The blandishments with which she had so fondly believed to conquer him, if she only obtained sight and speech with him, dropped suddenly away from her. She turned upon him sharply, with a firm lip.

"Amyas Ayre, you have deceived me. You have never loved me. You have done this out of revenge for the old rejection."

"Out of revenge! upon my soul, by every true and noble sentiment, no!" answered he; "it was from a truer, holier motive—out of love, Barbara Leighton."

Her face was bright again with smiles.

"You are angry at my continued engagement with Arnold Granger, although I have confessed to you that he has no hold upon my affections. Ah, Amyas, you shall have your wish. See here is the letter. I shall deliver it the first moment I meet him to-day. Read it, and say if you are satisfied."

Amyas Ayre took the unsealed letter she held into his hand, her magnificent eyes shining upon him tenderly, and read it mechanically.

His eyes sparkled as he folded up the paper and kept it in his hand.

"This settles the question. You do not love him, Miss Leighton; you have never loved him," he said, more calmly.

"No, I have never loved him," answered Barbara Leighton; "and my decision will give him very little pain. Now, Amyas, confess how hastily you have acted. What if a fortunate knowledge of your coming had not sent me here? We might have been parted for ever by your departure, and that absurd farewell. Tell me what it means. You will accept that fortune you told me of, you will forget the past, and we shall all be happy. Only assure me of that."

There was a smothered feeling in his voice which answered:

"Miss Leighton, I am not given to vacillation. What I wrote you must still be the sentence for you and for me. Amyas Ayre will depart from these scenes in a few days more, and will never return—never, never return!"

There was a solemn decision in the look and tone which once again smote down the brilliant visions of Barbara Leighton. She stood a moment staring at him, and then she said slowly, almost imploringly:

"You do not mean it; you cannot mean it."

"Heaven's truth is not more certain, Barbara Leighton!"

A low moan broke from her lips, and then she cried out, imploringly:

"Let me go with you, Amyas. I will go anywhere with you!"

What a concession for that proud, imperious woman! It was indeed genuine love, something beyond what could have been expected from so shallow and selfish a nature.

The artist's deep, sorrowful eyes glistened with tears.

"It cannot be. Miss Leighton, I ask your pardon, if the fault of all this proceeds from me. Go, I beseech you, and forget that you have ever known me."

"Do you think I will accept this poor explanation? Show me what the obstacle is!" demanded she, shaking from head to foot as with an ague.

Amyas Ayre hesitated a moment and then suddenly moved to her side, and whispered one brief sentence in her ear.

She stared at him a moment and then fairly shrieked:

"No, no, it cannot be! I will not believe it."

"It is true. I will swear it to you here under

this brightening sky, this golden morning, as fresh and beautiful as if just from the Creator's hand."

Barbara Leighton covered her face with her hands and burst into a passionate flood of tears.

"This is too humiliating," she said, at last, in a stifled voice.

"You must admit that more blame belongs to yourself than to me. You will soon discover that your wound is not so deep or painful as you anticipated. But let this lesson teach you to become a meeker, humbler, and truer woman. Otherwise I wish you all possible happiness. As I told you before, Amyas Ayre will never return to these parts Good-bye, Miss Leighton."

He bowed gravely, but with a kindly look in his eyes, and then retreated a little, but paused again in fresh dismay. There was Annie Haldeman, just emerged through the clump of willows, standing transfixed with astonishment, gazing at Barbara and then at the artist with grave, reproachful eyes.

"Miss Haldeman!" stammered Amyas, looking as if he longed for the ground to open and swallow him.

"I came here with eager sympathy to warn you of the espionage established over your movements. I was angry and indignant at the evil insinuations abroad in the town. I refused to credit any of the troublesome rumours about among the people of this neighbourhood," said Annie, with gentle dignity. "I believed there was good reason, even for the strange declaration that you went on that you were absent from town, while you were seen approaching the cottage under cover of night or the early dawn. But what I have seen with my own eyes, this clandestine meeting with the betrothed of another, how shall I explain that for you, Mr. Ayre?"

The artist stood with drooping head and listless arms, the very picture of humiliation and despair.

Annie Haldeman sighed, and then her face brightened as her heart gave one joyous bound of conscious freedom.

Was this the occupant of the stately throne she had reared? Was this the gallant hero whom she could look up to in adoring love and reverence? A thousand times no!

Ned Weston, with his frank, truthful manner, his manly independence and strength, was like an invincible warrior beside him. With a sigh the girl's last illusive dream faded away.

Amyas Ayre stood there in painful, bewildered silence. His mortification and Barbara's crestfallen face filled Annie Haldeman with indignation, but she could not help pitying their distress. She stood a moment, wishing one or the other of them would speak, when the attention of all was diverted by quick steps coming along the river bank, and then Ned Weston's voice was heard saying, in a low but distinct tone, as if the water conveyed the sound:

"I'm glad I've met you, Granger. By Jove, you'll be satisfied for yourself, for he can't be far from this spot. I saw him crossing the meadow below."

Almost as soon as the words were uttered the pair appeared in view, and stopped abruptly as if transfixed by the sight of the group before them, whose attitude betrayed more of the situation than words could have done.

"Where?" muttered Ned; "he made an appointment with two, and each has happened to discover the other! By Jove, Granger!" he added, with a comic glance at his companion's face, "one of them is Miss Leighton."

"I see, and the other is Annie Haldeman," responded Arnold Granger, in a tone of surprise and indignation; "can that man have been plotting all the time I believed him so innocent?"

"I have no doubt of it. I told you my opinion before. Miss Haldeman! Oh, no. I hope it isn't Miss Haldeman," responded Ned, in a sad tone.

"We will have an explanation at least," said Arnold Granger, sternly, advancing and gaining a position close beside the artist, who had folded his arms, with the look of a hunted animal in his mournful eye.

"Amyas Ayre," began Arnold, angrily, and then he paused abruptly, touched by the pained, stricken look on the pallid but still surpassingly handsome face, and added, imploringly, "You can give us a satisfactory explanation of these unpleasant appearances. I am sure that you can."

Miss Leighton had partially recovered her self-possession. She spoke now, in her cold, haughty voice:

"If I were Mr. Ayre I should question your right to demand any explanation at all. The meeting here at this unwonted hour is, to be sure, a somewhat remarkable affair, but then again when you refer to the circumstances it finds a very simple and natural solution. Mr. Weston's account of these early visits, and the watchful eyes of the neighbours beyond the hill, suggested to each of us this method of satisfying our curiosity, as well as allowing us

to warn our friend of the disagreeable and impertinent watchfulness abroad. Miss Haldeman came for that purpose, so did I, and I presume you gentlemen will give the same motive. I see nothing so very wrong in the affair. On the contrary, I think it a ludicrous but excellent jest."

As she spoke she gathered her shawl around her and tried to assume her usual careless manner. If she could only have conquered the pallor which blanched her face this little speech would have been more effectual. Annie Haldeman turned likewise.

"I think then we will return to the house, Barbara, though I would like to stop a moment and speak with Amy."

"Hold! do not," said Ned Weston, with grave decision; "there is more than you imply, Miss Leighton. It is a question of right and wrong. Have I made false statements, undeserved insinuations? or is Amyas Ayre what I declare him to be—an impostor, and a cheat?"

"Oh, Ned!" ejaculated Annie Haldeman, reproachfully.

"I shall be thankful to him if he can prove my words false," returned Ned, firmly; "let him do so, or else relinquish his claim upon the friendship of your family."

Amyas Ayre had been standing with drooping head and downcast eyes, as if reveling some weighty project. He looked up at this speech, and spoke hastily, with a slight tinge of bitterness in his tone:

"Had I not already taken that step, relinquished that friendship? what more would you ask? A few days hence and my image would have been forgotten, my name lost, my whole identity destroyed. None of you would have seen or been troubled with me again; no, never again throughout your life."

"Did you think you could make these clandestine journeys to and fro and never be discovered? You told us you were already gone, and yet you lingered in the place."

"I meant to go. Unforeseen exigencies compelled me to return, but to-day I should have accomplished my object. I should have taken my farewell to-day," he answered, in a weary, dejected tone, "but now it is of no avail."

"If you could only make a few explanations—surely you might without compromising your own honour or dignity—and then all this apparent mystery would be removed," said Arnold.

The artist was playing abstractedly with the letter in his hand. Arnold's eye fell upon the direction.

"It is a letter for me. I will take it," said he.

Barbara Leighton made an involuntary gesture, as if to snatch it away, and then retreated with an angry sneer upon her lips.

Arnold opened the letter, read it through, and bowed respectfully as he said, in a low voice:

"Thank you, Miss Leighton. I have never honoured you more during all our acquaintance than at this moment. An earnest, sincere sentiment, whatever it is, must always command respect."

The artist looked from one to the other with a mournful smile.

"Have you nothing to say?" asked Ned Weston, impatiently.

"Yes, I have something to say; there is no help for it now. I meant to escape from the humiliation and shame of telling it. But circumstances have conspired against me. You are right, Edward Weston—I have not walked openly and plainly before you. I have deceived you all, everyone of you, even that kind heart yonder which stands ready to shield and excuse me; even you, Arnold Granger, most of all, I have deceived."

Arnold Granger almost groaned as he asked:

"But your sister is innocent. There is no guile or deceit in her."

The artist did not seem to hear his words. Leaning against a small tree, with sorrowful eyes, and lips that twitched nervously as he spoke, he began:

"You shall know the truth, the whole truth now. Amyas Ayre is indeed a delusion, a sham. The name has its significance, though you may never have heeded it. Am as air, indeed! You shall see it dissolve before you like a pierced bubble. And yet I think, if you have any feeling, the story I shall tell will move your pity. Listen: There was once a girl, a simple, childish, and yet well-meaning, warm-hearted creature, upon whom came a terrible crisis which would have broken many a stronger spirit and perplexed more profound minds. The briefest space of time brought an experience with it which wrenched her away from home, friends, and every tie she had prized—look her, as it were, from a blooming garden in a happy home, and bore her out upon a wild, black, stormy ocean, a wretched wail of humanity, alone, all alone on the great sea of life. But she had a strong constitution, a young and vigorous frame. She could not die, the death-angel

would not gather her to his blessed rest. And she was forced to live. In all of us, despite the deepest misery, there is a strong animal instinct to exert from the world the livelihood it owes us. She came to feel dull ambition, a proud resentment against the aid of others. She looked around to find some employment by which she might gratify for herself what few aspirations were not scorched and killed within her nature."

"Stop a moment; why are you telling us this?" asked Arnold Granger, in a husky voice; "what has this girl to do with you?"

Amyas Ayre made a hasty gesture, raising two trembling hands to the face, across which fell a crimson blush, giving place to a deadly paleness.

He asked no more; the look and gesture were eloquent enough.

"By Jove!" muttered Ned Weston, under his breath, "here's a pretty business! What a simpleton I've made of myself!"

Annie Haldeman's face crimsoned and maintained its glow.

"She had but a small sum to save her from starvation without work," continued Amyas Ayre, "and she looked around for that opportunity which every soul born into this busy, hurrying world demands—the chance for usefulness and required labour. She found an unexpected obstacle to her warmest hopes. She had long been aware of a talent and love for brush and colour, and now is her hour of need halted it as the means of her advancement. But, lo, when she sought for the needed instruction from worthy artists she met with suspicious looks and supercilious insinuations. What, a woman, a young woman, enter an artist's studio as a pupil! The very idea was deemed absurd. She looked around her. Where there was the place where women whose souls moved there towards the beautiful whisperings of art found instruction? Echo answered—where? Discouraged and disheartened, she sought for other avenues of usefulness. The discovery she made filled her with indignation and anger. She found the needle and the schoolroom open to the efforts of women, but for every narrow opening here there were twenty eager, frantic aspirants. She soon discovered also that there were other advantages denied her sex. The same picture—feeble and faulty she knew—which she timidly priced at a fashionable shop, when reproduced by her own brush with far more faithful and accurate touches, was cut down to half the other's value because that was the work of a male artist and this was the offering of a woman. These things sank into her heart. She had perhaps keener instincts and deeper reasoning than many of her sex; she was moreover cut off from all the sweet endearments and loving allurements which other women receive. This wrong and unfair dealing from the world sank deeply into her heart. She pondered and pondered the matter, and her roused spirit refused to submit. Then flashed upon her mind what seemed like a direct inspiration. She who was so alone, so free from every restraining tie, what was there to hinder her from seizing upon the privileges denied her? You will see she forgot that it was better to suffer wrong than perpetrate it. I need not tell you—you have guessed—that she became Amyas Ayre. There was little difficulty then. She studied from a worthy teacher; her pictures brought their fair value; even the daintier, finer work—vases, ornamental boxes, and the like—brought a third higher value than the same work offered once for trial in the name of Amy. Well you may judge how wrong it was to cheat the world with its own weapons. She never for a moment felt the guilt until, Miss Haldeman, your brother, in his generous hospitality, pressed for farther acquaintance. Amyas Ayre saw you and Rose Ingalls, and all the smothered instincts of her nature cried out tumultuously for sympathy. It were so sweet to enjoy your free companionship, to give scope to the womanly emotions of her heart! Oh! I could not resist the temptation! I thought I could sustain the two characters without fear of detection. I promised myself to be guarded and circumspect. Elated and triumphant with my success hitherto, I plunged into the new deception. Amyas Ayre met you in the train, gave you a note of introduction to his sister Amy, declared his intention of being absent a week or more, and asked you to cheer her loneliness. You have not forgotten it? I left the train at the first station, stealthily returned, and was ready, in the character of Amy, to receive you. Sheba, faithful, devoted Sheba, whom I won for my life-long friend, has helped me to carry out the deception. There was a dangerous fascination in it at first; but soon I discovered my own impotence and feebleness. Circumstances conspired against me; difficulties, perplexities arose which nearly drove me frantic. I leathed myself always in your pure, truthful presence, Miss Haldeman, for my duplicity and hypocrisy. I resolved to escape.



I sent you word Amyas Ayre had departed. I meant it should be so; I meant to take leave of his character for ever. But when I reached town I found my patron and agent absent. I had intended to make an arrangement whereby my work might be transmitted to them through my sister's name. There was nothing for me to do but to journey backwards and forwards to sustain the two characters. I was Amyas Ayre in the evening at the city gallery, and Amy Ayre here in the cottage through the day, when any of you were likely to call. This very morning I had completed my last arrangement. Had I reached the cottage I should have removed this unbecoming apparel for ever. But fate has willed it otherwise."

The speaker paused; the pale face was hidden again beneath the trembling hands.

Ned Weston sprang forward, his broad chest fairly heaving beneath its strong emotion. He seized one of the hands and wrung it warmly, while he cried, in a husky voice, the tears shining in his honest eyes:

"Miss Ayre, I beg your pardon. I'm a great brute, and I deserve a good thrashing, and if you were only Amyas I'd let you give it to me. If it hadn't been for my interference it would all have been well enough. But I meant right, indeed I did. I didn't want Annie Haldeman imposed upon, and I thought—Oh, dear, I'm ashamed of myself!"

"You need not be. You were honest and upright yourself, and demanded it from others. Least of any should I refuse to honour you for it," replied Amy Ayre, with a heavy sigh.

Annie Haldeman advanced with smiling lip, although her eyes were still overflowing.

"My friend and sister," said she, "after all, it is better that this has happened. Now, indeed, can you become a cherished friend of the family. You shall see how tenderly we shall care for you."

This affectionate speech overcame the last show of fortitude, and Amy fell weeping and sobbing into her friend's arms.

"Oh, if you knew all you would indeed forget to blame, in compassion for my trials," faltered she.

Ned pulled out his handkerchief and went through a rather absurd pantomime, trying to hide his tears and another the sob in his throat, as if it were not a proof of his tender, honest, plainness that this little scene should affect him so.

Arnold Granger stood a little apart from the others, with folded arms and drooping head, and Barbara Leighton was pacing to and fro, with pale cheeks but flashing eyes, looking like a beautiful and infuriated tigress, baffled alike of its prey and its revenge.

"Come," said Annie, presently, "let us go to the cottage, since it contains no farther mystery, and when we see you in your proper dress we shall forget all the rest."

Half supported by Annie's arm, the mistress of the cottage led the way, and the others, even Barbara likewise, followed.

#### CHAPTER XIII.

SHEBA, with wide-open, astonished eyes and gasping mouth, stood at the open door of the cottage, staring at the group which came up the field and crossed the rear entrance from the river path.

"Whatever has happened?" stammered she.

"The play is ended," answered Amyas, in a weary tone of voice.

She had not been unconscious of Arnold Granger's cold looks and stern, white face, this girl in the gallant artist costume, and her heart had been sinking more and more heavy.

"Show my friends into the painting-room, Sheba. I will join them in a moment."

They passed in silently and took their seats, glancing furtively into one another's faces. Arnold Granger walked up to the stand and took up the vase already commenced for him. There was a spray of purple weed-violets, dainty and fresh as if laid carefully against the porcelain from the latest wild-wood gathering, and a tuft of fairylike moss, with the last touches completed; but the rest of the wreath was only outlined.

He surveyed it, but with eyes that saw nothing before them. There was a picture far, far away that he was striving after with fierce intentness, and it seemed to him that the suffocating grasp upon his heart would not relax until he found it.

The opening door showed them the graceful figure and lovely face of Amy Ayre. Her white dress was knotted with black ribbons, and a broad black sash fell down the skirt.

"Amyas Ayre is dead!" said she, the pale pink flushes coming and going on her cheek. "I need mourning for my sins, if not for him. Sheba has burnt the last vestige of his presence here. And now, my friends, be generous again and forgive me, and allow the world to believe in his life as they will

in his death. I think my punishment has been heavy enough without farther penance."

"It has!" cried Ned and Annie, in a breath. "We will defend you against farther blame or questioning."

"Nay," exclaimed Arnold Granger, coming forward from the table, the vase still in his hand, his eye beaming like a roused eagle's, "nay, there is farther questioning, at least from me. Miss Ayre, you have told us faithfully and eloquently the story of your struggle with the world and its hard dealings, but you have given no explanation of that crisis which cast you alone and friendless upon its mercy."

"Mr. Granger! Sir!" began Ned, in an indignant voice.

But Arnold Granger waved him back, and, holding out the vase, said, in low, deep tones of concentrated emotion:

"See! you have stamped the violet here, as by a fairy spell. Do you know what I see when I look at it? A far-away grove, a clear-eyed girl, and an admiring and loving youth, with his heart, for the time, clear of the intoxication of ambition and pride, wreathing exactly such violets in her hair. If he erred afterwards he expiated his sin! Can you see the picture?"

The girl stood trembling before him, but could not articulate a word.

"Really," remonstrated blundering Ned, "really, Mr. Granger, your conduct is remarkably annoying. The poor girl has been persecuted enough, and I for one—"

But it was Annie Haldeman's little hand laid on his mouth which checked him again.

Arnold Granger did not appear to have heard a word. With strong feeling in tone and look, he continued, without withdrawing his eyes from Amy's blanching face:

"Have I not shown my whole heart to you? Have I kept back a single emotion there that you should grudge me the whole truth? Do you not know all the anguish and agony I have suffered, and will you keep from me this blessed relief? Speak; tell me, though Amyas Ayre dies, and Amy vanishes into air, that someone else, as by a blessed miracle, shall come back to life and make my future once more bright with hope and joy. The old place is unchanged, untouched. Speak; you shall not deceive me any longer. Tell me that this wild hope which sends my blood tingling through every vein is not false and deceitful."

He put down the vase and turned towards her with outstretched arms, his face glowing with intense joy and hope. She seemed to fade away, like a snow wreath, till she dropped at his feet, weeping wildly.

"Arnold, oh, Arnold, you have found me out!"

He lifted her as if she had been a feather, and held her tightly in his arms.

"Aurelia Ireton, I have found you indeed! The ghost is gone—will haunt me no longer; but of the living, breathing reality I will hold such firm clasp that only Death's grim messenger shall be able to separate us. Speak, Relie; tell me that you are not grieved at this denouement, that you will go back with me and try if suffering and penitence have not purified me enough to make me worthy to share with you that inheritance of Arnold Wickford?"

The heart-glad smile breaking over her quivering lips, shedding rainbow gleams across her tearful eyes, was answer enough. Arnold Granger, entirely oblivious of the spectators around him, clasped her again to his breast and rained passionate kisses on cheek and forehead.

"Oh, my little Relie, I have you back, and my life's untiring devotion shall prove my penitence for the slight I put upon you. It will be a blessed day when I take you to my poor mother, who has never ceased to mourn for you!"

Ned's significant cough at length drew his attention to common affairs. Barbara Leighton was just flitting through the door. He caught a glimpse of her crimsons, angry face as she muttered:

"That girl! and I have allowed myself to be infatuated by her masquerading. Intolerable!"

"These kind friends are doubtless wondering if mysteries are never to cease. They deserve, and shall have, a candid explanation," said Arnold Granger, leading the young lady to her seat, and turning towards the eager, astonished faces of Annie and Ned.

"Once upon a time there lived a very romantic girl and a very feeble, misguided youth. They loved each other, of course. But the youth was led away by dazzling promises and false ambition, and he plighted his faith to another, knowing all the while that his best affections were centred in this young girl. And there was a great fortune which the youth relied upon as his own; but lo, the owner of the fortune died, and left it, not to the youth, but to the girl he had relinquished. Now, you think, would have

been her hour of triumph over the false, mercenary lover. But mark how unusual the sequel! This girl, in her pure, unselfish love, would not accept the fortune; and only when she found that by her death it would revert to him she flung herself into the river and died, to take herself away from his proud pathway, and give him back the prize. That is the version the world knows. There is a sculptured monument fifty miles away from this spot, on the old Wickford estate, which tells her story, and bears the name of Aurelia Ireton. Judge then how rejoiced the youth must be to find, after all these years of unavailing remorse and hopeless grief, that there is yet an opportunity for him to make atonement—that the maiden did not die, that she is alive, and is here!"

He lifted Amy Ayre's hand to his lips as he concluded, and said, wistfully:

"Oh, Relie, Relie, it was a dangerous experiment! but a kind Providence watched over you, and sent me here to find you. Would you never have spoken if I had continued blind?"

The girl smiled, and then nodded archly to the broad, dark face hovering in the open doorway.

"Come in, Sheba. What will you have?"

"Oh, Miss Amy, is all the make-believe over? and shan't I need for to watch the dear lover?"

"No farther need, Sheba. All our mystery is explained, all our trials ended, I trust," answered her young mistress, turning her eloquent eyes towards Arnold.

"Heaven be praised!" ejaculated Sheba. But she was not quite satisfied. She still lingered, and presently the faithful old creature whispered—"And please, Miss Amy, is this the master that's coming to live with you?"

"Brave, Sheba! that is precisely the question I wanted to ask, but hadn't the courage!" cried Arnold, with a merry gleam dispersing the agitation of his face.

He bent down to the young lady's blushing face and repeated, coaxingly:

"Answer her; give faithful Sheba her answer, I beg of you."

"I am afraid he would not be contented in the cottage, Sheba. I think he will take us away to a grander home. But you shall go, too, and if we are both disappointed or unhappy there we will return hither."

"Precisely! I hold you to your word. If I allow you to be unhappy there I shall deserve it," replied the jocular Arnold.

"Has all the world become crazy?" exclaimed a gay, merry voice from the doorway. "We come down to breakfast and find half the family missing, and Rosebud and I are nearly drenched with the dew, hunting hither and thither, in consternation, for the missing ones. We met Barbara, who was as angry and indignant at our rally as if we had accused her of robbing poultry roasts, but glanced enough to direct us hither. Miss Amy, I beg you to excuse our abrupt entrance, especially as you sent us no invitations to the morning party."

As Victor Haldeman's gay glance wandered from face to face he read that there had been some startling development. He looked around furtively for some sign of his friend Amyas, but was too kind hearted and well bred to allude to his absence.

"We came away without leaving any explanation, I grant you," observed Annie, rising. "Let us hope that the breakfast-table was left intact, for I am sure this early rising is a wonderful sharpener of the appetite. I beg none of you will refuse to accompany me home and share with me an impromptu breakfast *fête*, in honour of our present happy understanding."

As she spoke she whispered a coaxing entreaty in Aurelia Ireton's ear, which Arnold's wistful glance seconded.

And so the party went back, chatting gaily, the morning sun shining brilliantly upon them, the birds carolling joyously around them.

Victor heard the whole story from his sister, with some occasional interruptions.

"Oh, Rosebud," exclaimed he, "wasn't it fortunate for me I came to my senses before this was divulged? You would never have believed my penitence genuine but for that; whereas now you are well aware that I am the soul of sincerity, the mirror of truth, the quintessence of frankness, and that I deserve to be loved to the very utmost capacity of your warm little heart."

"The prince of audacity and self-assurance, you mean," answered Rose, in a tart voice, but with a smile that neutralized the tone. "But oh, Annie, think of poor Barbara!"

"Barbara had discarded him. He read the letter before any of this was known, and I fancy we shall not any of us bestow much pity on our aristocratic cousin. It was she who came between them at first, you know."

"What a romantic story!" ejaculated Rose. "One

can hardly believe it, although it has unfolded under our own eyes."

"And so we shall see no more of poor dear Amyas Ayre!"

Ned Weston glanced into Annie's face. It was still smiling and serene.

"Annie," murmured he, in a voice so low she could scarcely hear it, "I wish I were sure you would not mourn over his disappearance."

There was a deeper hue than ever on her cheek as Annie Haldeman replied, gravely:

"I wish you could see, Ned, how inexpressibly thankful I am for this happy explanation of his apparent duplicity and cowardice."

"And you don't think I am so much of a simpleton, though I can't paint pictures nor talk poetry, nor look delicate and dainty like a dandy? Only say that, Annie!"

She laughed heartily at his lugubrious tone.

"I think I would rather see you as you are, Ned—brave and trusty, frank, honest and true. These are more valuable qualities than you suspect in my estimation, now and always, Ned. There are all our friends on the veranda watching for us. Don't lag in that way, Ned, for I am famishing for a cup of coffee."

When they reached the veranda Victor, in the highest spirits, was introducing Arnold Granger's companion to his friends.

"What did you say, mother? Miss Amy Ayre? Allow me to correct you. Amy Ayre has vanished into—air. Amyas Ayre has gone to regions still air-ier, if you know where to look for them; and this is Miss Iretton, Miss Aurelia Iretton of Wickford Castle—shem! And—Rosebud is half famished, although she had plenty of dew and morning sunshine, which are very well in their way—therefore can we have our breakfast?"

They were presently gathered around the cheerful board, pronouncing, in Victor's extravagant fashion, the coffee nectar, and the food ambrosia.

"For which recipe," observed Mrs. Haldeman, "rise at daybreak every morning, and take a protracted stroll through the fields."

"But Barbara, where is Barbara?" asked her husband, suddenly aware of a void in the circle.

There was a moment's embarrassed silence, and then Rose explained to Annie, *sotto voce*:

"She is packing her trunks. She is going back by the first train."

"Peace attend, her!" whispered Victor, with mock solemnity.

But Barbara did not go. The post brought a letter which was sent up into her room. No one obtained a hint of its startling contents, or guessed the tempest of rage, mortification, and alarm which swayed that proud, imperious heart as she learned of her father's bankruptcy, and received his advice to make the best of her engagement to Arnold Granger, and hasten the marriage before the news was promulgated.

Barbara bathed her tear-stained eyes till they were presentable, used a little carmine on her pale cheeks, selected her most becoming costume, and met the party below at dinner time in the most gracious mood.

She was patronizing kindness itself towards Miss Iretton, charmingly friendly and unembarrassed with Arnold, and gay and cheerful with everybody. She alluded, once or twice, with winning frankness, to her former engagement, and took occasion to state that she herself had broken it off.

Another of the company, a weak, almost imbecile young man, whom she had scarcely deigned to look upon before, became the object of her dazzling smiles, her matchless arts. No one else heeded her movements, or suspected their object, until, only a week after, the paternal Walton was startled by his son's proud announcement of his engagement to Miss Leighton.

Edgar Walton had been so tacitly admitted to be lacking in intellect by all the family that no one had anticipated such an event as his marriage. Nevertheless, when the young man, like all of his kind, proved sullen and obstinate under remonstrance, the father, who was exceedingly wealthy, yielded consent, and did not even withdraw it when the thunder-bolt fell upon the financial world, and the great banking-house of Leighton & Son suspended payment. And so, after this poor fashion, Barbara's needs were provided for.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

A GLORIOUS summer's day shed its golden sunshine and wafted its perfumed zephyrs over the long-deserted mansion of the Wickford estate. It was a busy scene that it presented now. Servants were hurrying to and fro, carriages driving down the walk, and a group of richly dressed people gathered at the hall door, where wreaths of ever-

green and garlands of flowers were woven into a kind of triumphal arch.

Mrs. Hinde was nearly frantic between her agitation and her fears that something would go amiss with the great feast in preparation.

"It's so long since I've had anything of the kind to do. I seem to have lost half my faculty," she said to Mrs. Granger, who in her brocade silk and stylish cap looked scarcely less perturbed.

"And then the suddenness of it, and the strangeness. To think the wedding is to be here and the bride not Miss Leighton, after all, and nobody knowing who it is either, and Mr. Arnold not coming himself to look after things. I'm sure it's no wonder we're half bewildered, every one of us."

"He has left me uninformed as much as any of the rest," responded Mrs. Granger, trying to keep her voice from seeming resentful. "But I can't help feeling relieved that it isn't Miss Leighton. I don't believe we should have agreed with her at all. Dear me, there's Squire Walton and his daughters, and Mr. Richardson. If Arnold and his bride shouldn't come. I feel so ashamed to own that I don't know anything about them. Oh, Mrs. Hinde, there's a carriage with 'bridal favours.' It must be Arnold. If I could only keep out of my mind about that tablet falling down so mysteriously from poor Belie's monument I should feel better. But now I'm so hurried. It's the bride, isn't it? and there's the clergyman. De got the company into the drawing-room. And where's Mr. Granger?"

Poor Mrs. Granger, in a flutter of uncontrollable agitation, hurried to take up her position in the drawing-room, whispering to her husband, as she clung to his arm:

"I wish Arnold hadn't sent word to us that we were not to speak with him until after the ceremony."

"Hush. Arnold knows what he's about. You may be sure he's proud of her, or he wouldn't have written that he wanted us to greet her first as his wife. I had a glimpse of her face through that veil, and it was not proud and haughty. I'm sure, indeed, he had to encourage her, and that her eyes were full of tears," whispered her husband.

And now the rooms filled with guests, the clergyman took his position, in a moment there was a little stir and rustle, and the bridal party approached. Mrs. Granger scarcely glanced at her son's proud and happy face, but looked with wistful inquiry into the fair, sweet countenance shining forth from under the orange wreath and the misty halo of veiling lace. That single glance was reassuring.

"I shall love her; I know I shall love her! I feel as if I had always known her," whispered she, nervously, in her husband's ear as they took their position before the clergyman.

Everything seemed in a mist with her, caused by a burst of happy tears, until the voice of the clergyman pronounced the words:

"And you, Aurelia Iretton, take this man, Arnold Granger, to be your wedded husband—"

Mrs. Granger heard no more, but with staring eyes and parted lips stood like a statue, incapable of removing her eyes from the bride's face. Mrs. Hinde too, from her post beside the outer door, started forward and looked around her in wild amazement, kept in countenance, however, by Mr. Richardson, who drew off his glasses, wiped them vigorously, and, replacing them, surveyed the new-made Mrs. Granger with sharp and eager scrutiny. It was fortunate that the astonishment of the interested parties petrified their faculties until the service was concluded, or there might have been some ludicrous interruptions.

As it was, however, after receiving the congratulations of the clergyman, Arnold, with his new-made wife leaning upon his arm, waited decorously for his parents' approach.

Mrs. Granger almost seized upon the bride as she demanded, in low, heart-stirring accents:

"Relie, Relie, tell me if it be you? I am quite bewildered, and cannot think at all."

"It is Relie, mother, dear mother. Are you glad to welcome me?"

"Relie Iretton? my own little Relie?" exclaimed Mrs. Granger, still perplexed and astounded.

"No, mother dear, not Relie Iretton at all. Did you not hear the service? Aurelia Granger, Mrs. Arnold Granger," interposed her son, with proud smiles, though there was dew beneath his eyelashes.

"And she was never drowned then?" ejaculated his father, "and you have found her out?"

"Aye, I found her out, and I have brought her back. Mrs. Hinde, kind, faithful friend, don't linger there in the background. Come forward and be introduced to my wife. I am certain you will not be angry when you recognize her. I promise you we will keep such secure guard over her that she shall not run away again."

"This is too delightful!" ejaculated Mrs. Hinde. "Only to think! and here have I been dreading to see the new mistress!"

And the worthy woman then hurried away to look after the breakfast and make sure that this should be a feast not soon to be forgotten.

"Only to think," murmured she, "how she sat down here alone to eat her dinner on that day of the funeral, and was so downcast and disconsolate. And to think she was never so wicked as we thought, and didn't drown herself at all. I wonder if they'll tell me how it all happened. And there's the monument. Dear heart, now I guess how the tablet was broken. Well, well, if we oughtn't to be happy, thankful people, I don't know who should! And, bless me, there's the cook's bell! If she should spoil anything! Run, Jane, and see what she wants; and put plenty of flowers around Mrs. Granger's plate. Bless her sweet face! I somehow guess she has had plenty of thorns, so far. And it won't make a bit of difference about the will, will it? I wonder if anybody else has been sharp enough to think of that?"

Mr. Richardson had. With his courtly bow he approached the bridal pair and said, promptly:

"I am glad you concluded to adopt my advice, Mrs. Granger. You remember I told you then you could give him the estate if you would only marry him. I think if departed spirits can watch the events below my poor friend Wickford rejoices over this scene."

"You have never told me what was in his letter to you, Arnold," whispered the bride as the lawyer withdrew.

"I can repeat it word for word, for it burnt into my brain, as well it might, revealing to me the whole extent of my folly. Heaven be praised that all the pain and bitterness is over! Heaven be praised also that for all these five years of trial and separation, of wrong and folly, we stand here once more, united at last, my Aurelia, in heart and hand."

"And he told you—," persisted she.

"He told me that I had willfully thrown away a priceless gem because it was not set in gold; that I should find what I then believed a diamond of worth one of valueless paste. He said if I could win back your love, I should earn and deserve his fortune; otherwise, I must reap as I had sowed, and accuse no one but myself of blame."

"He meant kindly by us both," said the bride, in a low, reverent voice.

"I think he did, dear Relie; and that, as Mr. Richardson says, if freed spirits can follow earthly fortunes, he is even now rejoicing in our happiness. And now we must obey Mrs. Hinde's signal, and lead the way to the breakfast. Dear old soul! she is overflowing with pride and joy."

"I hope she will not take any dislike to Sheba. That faithful creature is somewhere upstairs, looking after my trunks, and will be likely to take a peep into the room. Oh, Arnold, how forlorn and wretched I was the last time I saw it! What a happy contrast is this!"

They passed under the flower-wreathed portal into the festive scene, the newly made wife leaning on her happy husband's arm, and took their places at the costly, magnificently furnished board, which was all good Mrs. Hinde's proudest hopes could have wished.

"And if you refer gratefully to the change, my Aurelia, what must be my solemn relief and joy? I, who stood here last a wretched, stricken, remorseful man, haunted by a wan, ghastly, dripping form, that seemed to threaten me with its life-long torturing presence. Ah, into what a lovely, beautiful presence it has been transformed! Can it be they are the same, this radiant being in bridal veil and gossamer robes, and tenderly smiling eyes, and that haunting vision—'Arnold Granger's Ghost'?"

#### THE END.

A GREAT geological curiosity has just been deposited in the museum of the Hartley Institution at Southampton, consisting of a piece of flexible stone about 2 ft. long, 7 in. wide, and more than 1 in. in thickness, having the appearance of rough sandstone, which bends with slight pressure like a piece of india-rubber or gutta-percha of the same size.

RELICS OF THE PAST.—Upon lifting one of the flooring deals in an old house about to be pulled down and rebuilt at Lillingthorpe, paintings of a remarkable and interesting kind were discovered on the under side of the floor and across the oak joists. The names of "Lord Fleming," "Erle Demaz," "Lord Letoun," "Erle De Argyle," &c., have been found apparently in connection with their coats of arms. The house, whose walls are above four feet in thickness, is said to have been a great resort of the nobility in the time of Queen Mary; and tradition has it that each nobleman sat under his coat of arms before proceeding in a body to the palace.





[THE SISTERS' REACTION.]

## KATHLEEN.

## CHAPTER I.

Crossing the Sound from U— to M—, one was first attracted by the imposing gray stone structure, rising, as it were, with its two monstrous wings stretching across the hill, which was known as Morley Heights. The building was a mixture of gables, angles, turrets and bulging octagonal sides.

So heavy was the masonry with its over-hanging ornamental design that at a single glance one could hardly distinguish any windows at all, only as the sun arose, shedding across the waters of the Sound a vivid, gorgeous light, then patches of red flashed out from unlooked-for places, the ruddy morning rays fermenting out every casement on the whole easterly front. The chimneys themselves seemed like short ornamental columns, so tastefully were they built.

An eccentric person must have had the building of the structure, or, what was more probable, each successive heir had made additions to suit his own peculiar taste; therefore an odd mixture of Gothic, Italian and French architecture showed itself in the Manor House of Morley.

Landing on the beach, and climbing the rather steep and rocky headlands, the eye next took in the adjacent city of M—, with its heavy, puffing machinery and sooty foundry flues, emitting strong, smoky, noxious stenches, like the influence of its myriad vices, far over the surrounding country.

Nearer yet, immediately under the shadow of Morley Heights and the gray stone edifice, was a cluster of fishermen's cottages, whose hardy occupants periodically crossed the Sound and put out for the open sea to ply their chosen vocation.

A blustering, stormy spring night was coming on. A heavy scud was bounding along the belt of the

horizon bordering over the sea; a strong wind moved the lower portion, it was evident, with great effort only, but the upper part, being light and vapoury, whiffed about like smoke.

The fishermen hauled their dories up early, chaining and locking them securely. The lighthouse-keeper across the Sound lit his lamp at dusk, for the hardest people along the coast dread these snarling, howling, tearing March storms as much as those of the more inclement seasons.

At Morley there was considerable bustle and stir—bustle, masked under apparent calmness. We refer wholly to the housekeeper's department. There was never anything like excitement visible except in these quarters, and even here it was tutored into comparative submission.

Mrs. Hammersmith, the housekeeper, and Mrs. Drot, the family nurse, talked across the cooking range, winking and twisting their mouths at every unusual sound.

"Hammersmith," at last Drot's voice found utterance for, although the sounds were much varied and altered by the twisting of the facial muscles, "Hammersmith, it will come to-night."

Hammersmith turned aside her false curls expectantly and pressed her cap-frills with her two little puckered hands.

"I am expecting," she began, with her usually behind-time voice.

Her manner was excitable; her head was full of ideas, but the laggard voice could never get along in time to bring them forth. The idea had at least five minutes the start, and the voice, hopeless of overtaking them, only came up in readiness to catch the last and least important of them.

"Exactly so," replied the valuable and voluble Drot, rubbing her knees with her rather plump palms, "hur-un! See if things don't happen as I predict about midnight—midnight—twelve of the clock."

"Twelve?" echoed the sterile Hammersmith.

"Let me see, you were here—you, Hammer—when on just such a night as this, two years ago this month, March, this windy month, we were called, routed, turned out of bed at twelve, at midnight."

"Yes, yes, Drot, when my lady gave birth to Master Harry."

"Of course—certainly; that very occasion."

"And you expect to-night—" prompted Hammersmith.

"A like experience for my lady—a like experience for us. Hammer, you might as well put on a fresh scuttle of coals, fill up your kettle—the large tea-kettle; we shall want a good strong cup to keep our eyes open and sharp by and by. I predict"—she hesitated, thinking at first that she had said enough to convince her companion; then remembering with complacent pity the extremely weak scope of her listener's imagination, she went on—"I predict that we shall need a cup of sparkling hyson, steeped strong, steeped yellow—hur-un!"

The darkness increased rapidly. Overhead the clouds were hurrying they knew not whither, and the wind dashed around the house with a heavy, surging sound inexpressibly weird-like and lonesome. The two old women glanced up at the windows, and drawing nearer together they resumed their conversation.

"She'll have a bad getting up this time—bad getting up."

"That she will," affirmed the housekeeper.

"With all her trouble, Hammer, with all her trouble, so different from the time when Master Harry was born; she will have a long, tedious and severe illness—severe, tedious."

"I should like to know," faintly commenced Hammer—Mrs. Drot's abbreviation of her companion's name, which was rather unmanageable to pronounce.

"I suppose it is not our business, but I should like to know."

"Her trouble?" suggested Dame Hammersmith, looking at her companion to coincide in the wish, or to reprimand her for it.

"No, the cause of her trouble. Why, I thought when Drot was drowned off the Banks that the rich, who didn't have to send their friends into danger to secure their daily food, could not possibly have like troubles with us; but I find that misery has a key to unlock both the palace and the hovel door, presenting his grim front to high and low alike."

"Presenting his grim front," chimed in the housekeeper.

At this moment their lady's bell commenced a sharp, decided ringing.

"There is the summons," said Drot, "and may the Lord be with the lady of Morley Heights in this fearful trial!"

"Amen!" echoed the other little wizened mortal, who, although only fifty years of age, had prematurely withered and dried, having travelled since the age of twenty-one—the period of her widowhood—alone and almost friendless; at least, without the well-spring of family love to renew her youth; therefore she had withered in a drought of affection.

"My lady wishes for your presence, Mrs. Drot," said the waiting-maid, looking in upon them.

"Immediately," answered Mrs. Drot, giving her silk apron a hearty patting, and then placing her hands all over her cap and curls "to see if they felt right."

She affirmed she had a way of seeming to feel when away from the mirror. Ere she left the room she whispered, with great importance:

"Hammer, keep the big kettle steaming. I shall run out occasionally to tell you," finishing with a multitude of incomprehensible nods of the head.

## CHAPTER II.

The room was elegant, being fitted up in a style of dark, rich luxury. The carpet was of heavy tapestry, covered all over with blue forget-me-nots, and red passion-flowers peeping out from among the brightest of green leaves. The furniture was of rosewood, elegantly carved. The crimson silk curtains, edged with blue, hung heavily, and with an air of gloom from the lofty casements. The large mirror reflected every object in the room and framed it rarely in its own rich and gilded trimmings.

A lady traversed this room backwards and forwards, her dark dress flowing behind her, and her shadow falling ceaselessly upon her own footprints. The dark, proud eyes were cast down with an expression of sorrow, fear, and anguish that was pitiful to look upon. Her form was elegant, the hands beautifully formed, telling their suffering to each other by mute, agonized pressures. The veins along the full broad brow stood out like firm cords, and the temples throbbed painfully. The red mouth trembled, as she

thus walked alone, like Him who once traversed the Garden of Gethsemane.

The nurse opened the door.

"Did you wish me to come to you, madam?" was the salutation that aroused Mrs. Mordant from her painful self-communing.

"Oh, is it you, Drot? Yes, I sent Lucilla for you. I am very ill."

"Heaven help you!" was the fervent and earnest response.

And as the good-hearted creature looked upon the anguished face she thought if she were only a daughter whom she could fold in her arms it would relieve both her own sympathizing nature and the lonely sorrows of the other.

"If I should die," said Mrs. Mordant.

"Which heaven prevent!" broke in the motherly nurse.

"If I should die," the lady continued, bowing to Drot to let her know that she had heard and appreciated her prayer, "take charge of my child or children until—she choked, but calmed herself instantly—"take care of them as long as circumstances will permit. Be faithful, considerate, kind and patient, Drot, as you would be to your own—more so, for mine will be doubly orphaned."

"My lady," said Drot, calmly, and with positive assurance, "you will not die."

"But I had none of these feelings before—the other time."

"Perhaps not," said Drot, again, with surprising firmness, "for circumstances were so different then from now."

"True," and a painful flush coloured the lady's cheek a moment, leaving it directly of ashen paleness; "but forgetting that, Drot, I may die, and if so do your whole duty by my child or children."

"I promise, reverently, solemnly, sacredly promise," repeated the nurse, with a tone of deep feeling.

"A thousand thanks, my good woman, and in case of my decease, my lawyer—Mr. Roderic—will see that funds are placed at your disposal sufficient for all reasonable wants. Pray for me in the trial that is upon me."

"I pray," reiterated Drot, raising her hands to her face in a mute but expressive manner, "I pray."

The stern gathered, shrieking around Morley Heights; it trod back and forth along the hill with a tramp that caused the earth to tremble and the bare trees to war in afright.

The rain charged and retreated and beat against the sheltered casements, now and then in sharp, distinct sounds, varied by the loose, rattling dash of the drifting sleet.

In the midst of this mad uproar of elemental strife Margaret Mordant, of Morley Heights, experienced the deep agony of woman's direful curse. The gray light of morning broke upon the advent of two more lives into this world of trouble. Two lives—for by a singular coincidence, right at the foot of Morley, where in sunny weather the gray stone pile threw oblique shadows, a fisherman's wife also gave birth to a young immortal.

Surrounded with lordly luxury, the lady of Morley was infinitely more alone than Mrs. Bethlin, although the rude fisherman's cottage let in the rain in more places than one; yet while the former turned despondingly away from her babe, the latter, with a mother's holy love, clasped hers to her warm heart in sheltering tenderness.

### CHAPTER III.

WE all know how swiftly the weeks glide into months, and the months array themselves into the startling sum of years. As the children, which were born during that remarkably tempestuous night, grew in stature and in intellect, a student of human nature would have been delighted at the contrast presented by the faces of the two born under such different circumstances.

Caroline Mordant possessed no beauty of feature. She was timid and reserved to an excess, while her intellectually formed head gave promise of a most brilliant if not remarkable future.

The little Bethlin girl was a child of extraordinary beauty, loving and winning in her manners. Her luxuriant hair, fine as unspun silk, rolled itself readily around the finger, falling off in long black, glossy curls.

Her eyes were of a clear, soft black—large and changeful in expression. Her rounded cheeks were as fair and soft as white velvet, and her sweet mouth was of a bright crimson hue. Altogether, she was perfectly beautiful, such a child as we are very apt to admire in pictures.

"She's a beauty," said the bluff father, proudly; "one day she will make a fortune by means of her matchless face."

"May you prophesy correctly, Edward," replied the wife, with a sigh; "but I think that in most

cases beauty is the least of heaven's gifts for which to give thanks."

"Why so?" asked the astonished fisherman.

"It soon fades," replied the sensible wife; "at best it is generally a lure to vanity and fickleness; and, worse still, it attracts the eye of the libertine, and—"

"Hold, for heaven's sake! Drot, how far are you looking into the future?"

"Simply to the time when our child may stand in the world fatherless and motherless, without a protector."

"Oh, don't!" urged the sanguine father; "we our demise, wife, we shall have this little Jeanette married to some bluff but honest fellow, who will be a four-sided wall of protection."

"I trust that you may be right."

"Besides," he continued, "here's Kathleen," referring to their other and elder child, "to be a shield and buckler to the young girl—the beauty—her sister."

Kathleen slipped her hand into her father's, and smiled in his face.

He stroked the soft hair of the silent but self-instituted protectress.

At Morley Drot analyzed and inspected her charge.

"Caroline is a lovely name, a very lovely name. A common name, too; but why did my lady choose it? Why?"

"I like it," asserted Hammersmith, boldly.

"Like it?" echoed Drot, in disgust. "She's of high birth and blood. Why was she not called Lucretia, Josephine or Euphrasia?"

"Mercy!" fairly screamed Hammersmith, for once aroused to life, and trying to get her voice up to the speed of her thoughts. "You are not in earnest, Drot? Who could keep in breath with such a name as that about the house for one to call at times?"

Drot gave her cap a pull, that showed her temper to be a little awry, and, looking over her spectacles, which during the before-mentioned movement had fallen down to the end of her nose, where they stepped for a time, she surveyed Hammersmith for one moment with withering contempt, but instantly discovering that the poor little housekeeper was already as nearly blighted as anything can well be and yet retain vitality, the considerate nurse forbore the edict of total annihilation.

"I can't bear the name."

"I like it."

With one more glance of mute defiance they dropped the subject of cognomens.

"Harry is a forward child."

"Hammersmith," said Drot, solemnly, "I have my thoughts."

"Yes," affirmed the housekeeper.

"Too forward." And Drot's knitting-needles took umbrage, reared upright and struck against each other.

"Too forward?"

"I tell you," emphasized the oracle, "there'll be trouble with him. I don't prophesy it because I wish it or hope for it, but simply because I foresee it."

"How?" was the lucid and edifying rejoinder.

"I prophesy; there are signs—hur-um!"

A silence followed, interrupted only by the battle of the knitting-needles. At last they fell down in clear exhaustion, and Drot resumed her conversation, in her dispirited way:

"Won't mind his mother now—self-willed, headstrong."

"Headstrong?" echoed Hammersmith.

"Now Caroline is altogether different; if she don't prove sullen she'll be a good child—remarkably good. There are signs—hur-um."

It was exactly as the old ladies had said. Master Harry was a young tyrant, ruling or striving to rule the entire household.

Of a bold, energetic disposition, he gave orders, and if they were not on the instant attended to he arose in rebellion, storming like a young fury, smiting one juvenile hand into the other and yelling with stentorian force. There was metal enough in young Mordant, if rightly directed, to revolutionize a nation.

The pale, sad lady mother, although justly proud of her splendid boy, was not blind to his faults and her imperfect influence over him. When Caroline was four years old and himself little more than six, he led her a terrible life, turning her away from the cozy corners where she had retreated, charging her with a roar, shouting as he rode grandly about upon a long stick:

"The Goths and Vandals! Rouse! the Goths and Vandals are upon you!" Which words he had learnt in some unaccountable manner.

And Carrie rushed out of her retreat in astonishment, only to be driven recklessly about the room, he leaping over chairs and ottomans in perfect gloe. And yet Caroline loved him—loved him infinitely

better than the little tyrant deserved, being always ready to give up her choicest playthings to his domineering whims, and it not infrequently happened that she only yielded them to destruction—certain destruction, for at the least offence taken at their dumb silence he ground them beneath his despotic heel.

So matters went on until poor Lady Margaret thought about finding a governess for the children. Miss Lyle, an educated, accomplished lady of uncertain age, from Marlow, was installed as teacher. This was when Master Harry was eight and Caroline six years of age.

"I don't know," frankly observed Miss Lyle, at the end of a week, "I don't know, Mrs. Mordant, whether I can retain the situation here or not. Master Harry is perfectly unmanageable. I must be allowed to punish him or leave. I am quite tired of having his book thrown in my face at the least provocation. Let me speak freely. He will be ruined, madam, unless immediately put under some restraint."

"I understand you," answered Lady Margaret, without being in the least offended with Miss Lyle; "but punishment amounts to nothing with him. What cannot be mildly taught him he will never receive. No punishment that I ever inflicted has in the least affected him. It is his nature, and I am sure that I am at a loss what to do."

"Allow me to advise you, madam. He has never had anything but a yielding woman to deal with. Install a man here at Morley, and things will go on differently."

A deep colour came over Margaret Mordant's face, for she misunderstood Miss Lyle's remark; but never being hasty to reply she comprehended the right meaning as she betrayed her thoughts by speech.

"A tutor, Miss Lyle?"

"Precisely, madam."

"Do you know of anyone whom you could recommend?"

"No, I do not. I resign my position with some sorrow. The situation here, looking from the window where she stood, is beautiful. All things around me, her eyes running over the rich adornments of the room, are elegant in the extreme. But, madam, I should not do right by remaining. I could not do justice to your child, yourself, nor myself, therefore as soon as my place can be filled I must leave."

"I am sorry," said Lady Margaret, with a sigh.

"I am also sorry, in many respects very sorry; but when I feel it my duty to speak or act, Lady Mordant, I always do so at the earliest moment."

"Thank you; you are right."

But the lady resigned her with sincere regret, believing her to be an honest, Christian woman, such a one as she would like to influence her little ones.

A few days after this matter was arranged, and a tutor was obtained.

"What next?"

Drot for the instant could not freely breathe, thinking of the enormous announcement with which she was to startle the placid equanimity of Hammersmith.

"Well?" demanded the person addressed.

"Madam is going to have a man—a man this time!"

The housekeeper turned pale for an instant, thinking that Drot had lost her wits, for her manner was peculiarly impressive. Therefore under the circumstances of the present statement she felt her cap tremble with horror and afright. Either they were terribly at fault as to the pure life of madam, or Drot by this announcement showed total aberration of that strong mind which could repeat itself over and over without either losing itself in its wandering or forgetting what it to say.

"You are startled, Hammersmith? So was—so am I!"

"Horror-struck!" ejaculated the worthy dame, not yet comprehending Drot's meaning.

The nurse herself understood her auditor's horror before it could be explained.

"A tutor."

"Mercy upon us, a tutor! Oh!"

"Why, what did you think?" demanded Drot, energetically.

"I don't know, I am sure, that I don't. I have no idea of what I did think."

"Yes, a man—a tutor," continued the nurse, "is to come here as ruler over Master Harry and be a disturber of the peace. I storm and rave to myself. I wish to advise with my lady, but should I? Dare I? Would it be proper?"

"It would not."

"You think so, Hammer? You? If you have arrived at that conclusion already, it must be improper to think of remonstrating."

Hammersmith, elated at the wonderful urbanity of the usually domineering nurse, rubbed her dry



palms meekly one over the other, and complacently nodded her head.

"Say nothing, Drot; it is not our business."

Drot, not doubting but that the tutor would be a middle-aged, somewhat infirm man, probably hoping sooner or later to drop her matter-of-fact cognomen for one more euphonious, resigned herself to the change gratefully, knowing that she was much in her mistress's presence, and indispensable in the house; this view taken, she searched among her ribbons for a smart purple one to place in her reception-cap.

Hammersmith, above such speculations, sat unmoved in her seat, her neutral gray ribbons hanging limp about her.

#### CHAPTER IV.

In fine weather Mr. Bethlin rowed his two girls across the Sound, to the infinite delight of Kathleen, she being as brave a young creature as ever the sun shone on. At the age of twelve she could hold a tiller, keeping the heavy wherry on its course, or take an oar and row the dory to the lighthouse and back, always, to be sure, with her father within call, ready to spring into the boat and go to her assistance in case of accident. But Jeanette was never allowed to go into any danger.

Being naturally of a silent, apparently sensitive disposition, she was shielded from every care by the doting parents, and even the brave elder sister had learned to watch the young girl's manner, and to gratify her slightest wishes.

Mr. Bethlin toiled early and late to afford his daughters a better education than his neighbours cared to give theirs.

For many years Mrs. Bethlin had gone to Morley twice a week with a basket of fresh fish, having orders to supply the family with that essential article of food.

Whether it was this fact—her constant intercourse with people of more refined manners, and of better education than she possessed—that impressed the mother's mind to that extent which influenced her children's dispositions, or whether it was by some freak of nature, still the fact remained the same.

The humble peasant sisters possessed acquisitive minds, searching everywhere after knowledge.

When Jeanette was about fifteen years of age she would lean for hours upon the paling that surrounded the fine domains of Morley, looking at the young master, mounted on his full-blooded hunter, followed by the groom and hounds crossing the woodland, and, raising her small hands to heaven, would cry:

"Oh, for one atom of his wealth to fit me for a higher station!"

During vacation times—for Edward Bethlin sent his daughters to school at Morton—the practical Kathleen helped her mother about her linen weaving, turning the bleaching webs, winding the flax around the distaff, and stamping her strong young foot on the humming wheel, conjugating her verbs in company with the buzzing spindle. Then at night she would spring from her seat, bounding down to the beach as the boat, with her wide, sweeping oars, like low-spread, inflexible wings, flew in towards the beach, and, seizing the wet net, help her father haul them ashore and spread them to dry.

Edward Bethlin always welcomed Kathleen with a hearty cheer, and accepted her aid with a smile, but he would no more have thought of allowing the younger child—the beauty—thus to assist him than he would have conceived of caging a butterfly for useful purposes. He would say:

"Katie is like us, wife, taking naturally to our ways, but Jeanette must never labour in this rough way."

And sometimes, for a moment, Kathleen would feel the frown come beneath her brow's dark arch as she thought how easily she could fall into her beautiful sister's idle life; but she never once gave utterance to those natural feelings, for the good, brave girl nearly worshipped that sister. She knew that Jeanette was gifted with peculiar charms. God had made her a flower, while she herself was—well, perhaps a thorn-bush, but in that case the birds would build their nests in her bosom and sing sweetly in the inner recesses of her life, if she would let them, and she would. She would persevere and be as agreeable as she could, and shelter the flower from the winds it could not bear. Heaven be praised for such natures as these.

Jeanette looked out of place in her rough home. Her footsteps were as light as the gazelle's, and so different from the heavy tramp of the rough coast women, that she attracted the attention of Harry Mordant as he walked along the shingly beach.

"Jacques," said he, addressing his tutor, "who is that?" pointing his whip towards the cliff where

Jeanie Bethlin stood surveying the pair galloping past her eyrie.

"Jeanie Bethlin, the fisherman's daughter."

"Bah!" ejaculated the heir of Morley, with overpowering disgust, and with an accent jagged as the cliffs, and a voice of thunder. "Yet she looked well up yonder."

"And she speaks well," answered his companion, tartly, there being something so supercilious in young Mordant's manner that he felt it necessary to defend the humble Northumbrian dialect of Jeanette's ancestors.

"Do you know her, Jacques?"

"I have seen her, and heard her speak."

"Is that all? But, psaw! I'm back to college again next week, so why should I question?"

"And why should you do so if you were not?" was the blunt query.

Harry turned in his saddle without answering his companion, and, taking out his white handkerchief, waved it gracefully towards the cliff on which the young girl stood. A scowl gathered over Jacques's brow.

"The eagle should never disturb the thrush," he said, pointedly, eliciting merely another wave of the handkerchief towards the mountainous headland.

Jeanette, with sparkling eyes, watched the proud riders out of sight as they turned the distant promontory.

The next week after this incident Morley subsided into quiet, for the uneasy young master was engaged in his studies. Lady Caroline was calmness personified. Her mother retained Jacques in her son's absence as teacher for her daughter. The young lady was a rapid scholar, being far more superiorly endowed with natural talents than her brother. She was rather plain, at least without any particular beauty, with a perfectly colourless complexion, and a manner reserved and proud to a fault. Borne of gentle blood she had inherited an inordinate degree of pride.

Feeling as she did that the lower or poorer classes were meanly born, it was not wonderful after all that the roystering, dare-devil brother should be the general favourite among both servants and acquaintances. Harry possessed perhaps as much pride of birth, but he stooped to amuse himself, or pass away an idle hour with perfect freedom, for the time mingling with the lowest of the people unconstrainedly. But he knew how to limit his unrestrained manners. When he tired of his amusements he threw the plaything away, or ground it beneath his heel, whether that plaything were human-kind, or otherwise, with very much the style of his childhood.

Lady Margaret worshipped her children, but she, too, possessed a large share of overbearing pride. For its sake she had martyred herself, crushing to death some of the sweetest affections and memories of the soul. For its sake she had drunk her cup of gall in silence and uncomplainingly.

News came occasionally to the coast people of the wild, reckless life led by the heir of Morley in the distant spot where he was thought to be attending to his studies, and the people wondered whether his mother knew of the rumours abroad. Many a peasant mother thanked heaven that her boy would never be under the unholy influence of ill-wed wealth.

"They have had another piece of trouble with Mordant at Oxford," observed Mr. Bethlin one evening as he sat mending his broken nets.

"Have they?" asked his wife. "Dear me, Edward, if half these stories be true he will break Lady Mordant's heart."

Mr. Bethlin shook his head disconsolingly.

"No danger of that, wife. Her heart is proof against that or it would have been broken years ago."

"I know; poor lady, she has seen a great deal of trouble."

"One would hardly think so," observed Mr. Bethlin, musingly, drawing out his net needle so vehemently that the strong twine was nearly broken.

"What is this new affair of his?"

"I only caught at disjointed sentences as the people of Marlow discussed the matter. I thought I would not ask questions, seeing we were neighbours at the Heights, for it might somehow reach Lady Margaret and give her offence. Strong drink—liquor had a share in it, and general disorderly conduct, with talk of expelling him from college."

"Dear me, I hope it will not come to that. How the disgrace would wound his mother!"

"He is high spirited, and people with whom he comes in contact must know that, and should not sneer or tempt him."

Jeanette for the first time spoke warmly in his defence.

"Well, well, pet," said the father, "the rich generally are not ever patient and forbearing."

"But, father, it is human nature only. The poorer classes would brook as little restraint as the rich, only they dare not retaliate for insults heaped upon

them; it would simply be a suicidal act, throwing from themselves the means of providing for their families. Depend upon it, father, it is circumstance only that make the difference between the general dispositions of the rich and poorer classes."

"Well done, Katie; well done, my philosophical and philanthropic reasoner," was the father's laughing reply, while Jeanie's eyes sparkled in gratitude for her sentiments being expressed as she could not express them herself. "You put the whip across our shoulders merrily. Why should you defend young Mordant thus?"

"You mistake, father; young Mordant was out of my mind when I commenced speaking. I merely plead for charity's sake, sir. I feel that within me, and I argue from it that others may feel the same, or at least be perfectly free to act as they please without let or hindrance, only I recollect that the working classes must yield their wishes, if not their principles, to their employers. Those cramped and bound by circumstances should judge kindly of those who, with no more criminal instincts, are tempted by a full purse to unbridled licence. Am I not right, sir?"

"You are, my girl, I suppose, in one sense; but yet everyone should discipline themselves to govern perverse appetites."

"Can everyone do that, father?"

"They ought to do so, Katie."

"Doubtless they ought, but can they? Some people are born into the world with evil dispositions predominant. They have some, however, perhaps many good instincts, but the evil is stronger than the good. The stronger party nearly always rule."

"You would make machines of us, Katie, worked upon without our will or licence."

"Well, sir, if I think it is to do, as we are told it is, then where is the responsibility to rest?"

"To think it is to do? What are you driving at? I have not caught your meaning."

"I refer to that passage of the Bible where it says, 'If a man look after a woman to lust after her, he has already committed adultery;' &c. When with an effort of the will we can control our thoughts, then, and not till then should we, or shall we, be held responsible for their transient proclivities."

"Who taught you this art of arguing, my daughter?"

"Nature, perhaps; and again it may be my own evil proclivities."

With a shake of the head, as if he could not dispute the matter farther, Mr. Bethlin turned away.

#### CHAPTER V.

MEANTIME, at a sorry pace, Harry Mordant plunged through his collegiate course. With his sharp, active intellect he might have been a brilliant scholar had his head been evenly balanced, but alas! never having been properly restrained and, withal, being born with those perverse attributes that nearly always wreck their possessor, his education was a superficial polish, and nothing more.

His noble, engaging personal appearance, and his fine address made him a general favourite, as we have before said, albeit he one moment caressed and the next crushed those whom chance or fancy threw into his path.

The first intimation the coast people had of his return home was the jubilant yelping of his hounds as they scented the game of the broad forests lining the estates of Morley.

After that he was often seen scouring across the open, lower land, with his dashing green jacket trimmed showily with gold, his fine hair careering wantonly with the wind. And you may be sure that scarcely a day passed without Jeanette catching a glimpse of this scion of a grand old stock.

It was late in the autumn when he returned, and he ran riot in hunting over his domains, little caring what his game might be, so long as it amused him for the time being.

And one day there arose a fearful autumn storm; it lowered darkly over sea and land, bursting ere nightfall with a maddening rear, and the shivering sea shook all along the rocky shore. The daylight vanished early, yet the night was not so terrible as it would have been without the full moon riding triumphantly behind the driving, pouring clouds. Ere the darkness shut out the distant objects a full-rigged ship was seen bearing in from the open sea, crossing in a north-westerly direction from Dover to the safe, sheltered harbour of Marlow.

And the shrieking gale beat destructively upon her, plunging her into the hellow of the seas and engulfing her in the flying foam. Anxious people along the cliffs watched her until the darkness veiled her from sight. They lit beacons along the coast, showing her, if she were familiar with her course

exactly where the calm harbour of Marlow extended its open arms protectingly towards her.

"What do you think of her prospects, Bethlin?" asked a brother fisherman.

"Oh, she'll weather it, if she be at all familiar with the coast."

"Do you imagine that they will give the gray reefs sea-room?"

"If they know the coast they would be foolish to do otherwise, for the boiling surf must roar terribly over them by this time."

"But hear the gale below; they can hardly distinguish the one from the other."

"If she should haul closely to the promontory yonder she'll go clear, but should she stand more for the open sea she'll founder."

"Heaven help them!" ejaculated another; she is within half an hour's time of her doom if she steers for the reefs."

"Could we fire a signal from the gun on the cliffs?"

Mr. Bethlin turned in surprise to answer this question of young Mordant, who, unperceived, had joined the group.

"The swivel is broken," answered the fisherman.

"But could we not belt it to the carriage and warn them? It is a packet-ship, sir, loaded, crammed with passengers. I made it out with my night-glass not fifteen minutes since."

"We shall be too late, Mr. Mordant; she will strike in less than ten minutes at the rate this gale is driving her on."

All saw the force of his reasoning.

A breathless pause ensued, all listening intently. It was evident that if she were to sink she would do so without a sign.

"Can it be that she is likely to go by safely?" at last someone asked.

"Send up the lights, my girls!" shouted Bethlin, raising his strong, hoarse voice above the tempest. "Pour on the tar, pour on the tar!"

The gusts of rain circled around, or fell spluttering and hissing upon the brilliant blaze. The scene was worthy of an artist's happiest efforts.

The group of rude fishermen on the rocky beach, with their clothes flowing gaily in the wind, the hard, weather-beaten faces turned towards the sea that boiled white with froth at their feet, and showing a spectral phosphorescent gleam.

Above and behind them the brown cliffs towered threateningly, and on the summit of the very highest stood, in bold relief from the red blazing background, the fisherman's beautiful younger daughter, while her sister piled the combustible stuff on the blazing beacon.

Mordant himself, too impatient and excited to stay upon the beach, had sprung into a wherry, which, fastened to the shore by a strong piece of cabling, reared, plunged, and ran backwards with all the wild manœuvring of an ungovernable colt; and the young heir, thus dancing up and down, found that the democratic wind whisked his green velvet hunting-jacket about as if it were made of coarser material.

Reckless of wind and rain, he would not return to the Heights for more suitable apparel.

Directly from the northward came a sudden boom, another and another, and a wild shout went up from the coast.

The good ship had passed safely into the out-stretched arms of the harbour of Marlow. She had a brave captain; he would not call for help to the weak men on the shore.

What could they do against the terrible strife of the elements? Comparatively nothing. He would not call to them. His guns should not tell his fear. He knew they could not reach him across that line of breakers which he saw foaming in the gloomy night.

His fears might only call others to destruction; but now that he had come safely into port the gallant fellow bethought him to give, through his guns, a wild halloo to those equally brave hearts who stood out in the tempest to aid, if possible, the human souls on board the, as they thought, doomed vessel.

Mordant sprang from the boat on shore, and scaled the cliffs with the speed of an antelope until he stood beside Jeanette.

"My brave girl, what do you do here on these windy heights?"

"We lighted the beacon together—Kathleen and I—and while she kept it flaming and beaming out into the darkness I stood expectant of the dreadful shipwreck."

Her accents, though necessarily high, for the tempest was still raging, were as clear and silvery toned as bells; and as the young man bent to catch her answer her fine dark eyes, large and radiant, were raised to his face.

The older sister, looking on as the bright blaze

revealed them, thought that they were more beautiful than any two people which she had ever seen before; but a cold, chilling fear crept through her heart as she noticed the animated glances of admiration that he threw upon Jeanette.

At that moment Mordant declared to himself that he would often visit the coast to become better acquainted with the fisherman.

And Jeanette, as the heir left them, for he would accompany them to the door of the cottage, felt a keen thrill of pleasure in this meeting with this polished young man of the world.

What a strange train of thoughts ran through the heir's brain as he strode homeward! His sister, with her high, aspiring nature, would sit within her sumptuous room, with her white hands folded idly upon her silken dress, and her red lips closely shut, saying, maybe:

"Heaven pity the seamen to-night!" while those fair sisters—for Katie was lovely with her noble, resolute features—went out, during the fierce elemental uproar, to aid and warn those who might be driving towards the dangerous coast.

And yet he did not make the proper distinction here that he ought to have done.

"We lit the beacon together," was the ingenuous explanation given by the young girl, and "while Katie fed the flame and kept it burning I watched for the shipwreck."

She watched, and might really have witnessed part of the dreadful spectacle, had not the thoughtful sister fed the flame.

Thus it is throughout the world.

A certain portion, and by far the greater portion of mankind will enjoy themselves or sleep in velvet-lined carriages, without even once thinking of the ceaseless toil of others, without whose aid the engine could not run.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## THE WEB OF FATE.

### CHAPTER X.

LEANING on the arm of the king of the evening, Beatrice Griffith trod the platform scarcely less noted than he, pausing as he paused to bow to the welcome, and sitting at last at his elbow.

The whole seemed to her only a fitting frame for Sidney and his address, and we could scarcely wonder at her. Sidney Griffith was eminently a fascinating speaker, smooth, elegant, utterly captivating. The listeners hung upon his words with suspended breath, hung upon his beauty and grace with fixed and shining eyes, and, listening, forgot what they came for, except that they came to hear him.

"I would die for him," thought Beatrice. "If I were a pearl I would be dissolved in his wine."

She never took her eyes from him, and never dreamed how she was envied her place by the guests. She was glad when it was over and they went through an avenue in the crowd. But then there was a splendid supper which kept them till near midnight.

The windows were all open to let in what coolness might be, and large fans waved slowly, worked by machinery, and made a soft breeze when no other came.

A band sent forth their wild, sweet strains, but not so loud as to drown the talk. Leaning against a purple curtain, looking like a statue in her white dress, Beatrice listened and looked and kept silence.

"See her with that half-raised hand and inclined head," said the marquis. "She is the very genius of listening."

She smiled as he approached her, took his arm to a sofa, where presently she was surrounded by a group of epauletted gentlemen and notables, all vying for her favour, and admiring more the more they looked.

And at last she and her brother-in-law were alone.

"Such a crowded day," she said. "Now I am going to sleep. Good-night!"

As she glanced back upon him her whole face was bright and lovely, and her airy draperies floated out like a cloud.

"Stay for a cup of kindness," he said, eagerly. "How can you go without that? I thought it had got to be a settled thing."

She dropped her eyes and coloured.

"I don't think that wine quite agrees with me, Sidney," she said, hesitatingly. "I never feel so well after taking it."

"So you said last night, Beatrice. But I have a new kind to-night. I get it on purpose for you, and it is what you need. It will strengthen you."

He brought a little flask, and, opening it, filled a delicate bubble of glass, presenting it to her with such a smile as would have overcome any scruple.

She took it, smiled into his eyes, and drank it to his health.

"Now a glass for you," she said.

"Not from that," Mr. Griffith said, pouring for himself a glass of port. "That is for invalids, and no one is to taste a drop but you. It is not easy to get."

It would seem that the excitement of the day and the late supper were too much for Mrs. Griffith, for that night she was taken violently ill, and the physician who was called was for some time doubtful if he could save her.

They laid the illness to a salad of which she had eaten in the evening. Somebody had once been poisoned at Clarendon House by eating a salad in which mushrooms were introduced, and this was one of the same. Ever after, if anyone there was taken suddenly ill people began to talk of the salad. Mrs. Griffith's symptoms being similar, the physician administered an antidote, and had the satisfaction of seeing his patient better in the morning. But it was several days before she was able to go out.

Sidney Griffith, though distressed and alarmed beyond measure at first, proved himself a good nurse, devoting himself quite to the invalid's recovery.

He took her out to ride every day, he read to her as she lay on her sofa, he presently quite ousted the hired nurse, who was no longer needed. Then they fell into their old way of living. One of these days Beatrice stepped unawares into her brother-in-law's room, and, after standing a minute fixed in distress and surprise, stepped silently out again, unseen. One of his worst creditors was with him, and for the first time she knew what harsh and insulting talk her idol had to listen to, and what a skeleton lay under the fair drapery of his daily life.

She walked her room in distress. What could she do for him? Should she ask her uncle or Margie for money? They would know at once who it was for. What could she do? Suddenly a ray of light broke in. Hastily dressing herself for a walk, she took a little parcel and went out. In a few minutes she reached Lascelles's, the jeweller's, and was invited into his private room, where she stated her errand and offered her jewels for sale. The jeweller looked at her a moment in steady silence. Then he looked down and thought.

"They are valuable if one wishes for diamonds," she urged. "But I have use for the money."

"You say, madam," the gentleman stammered, "that you wish to sell those diamonds out of the settings?"

"Yes, sir," she replied, surprised and annoyed at his reluctant manner.

"You think that those are diamonds?" he asked, taking the bracelet in his hand and holding it while he looked searchingly into her eyes.

"Certainly, sir," she said. "It was a present from my uncle."

"Are you willing to leave it with me, and let me speak to your brother-in-law about it?" he asked.

"Indeed not," she exclaimed, indignantly. "Mr. Griffith has nothing to do with it. If you will not take them I will carry them elsewhere, but I absolutely forbid your mentioning the subject to Mr. Griffith."

She took the bracelet, and was going.

"Stay a moment," the gentleman said, looking after in painful embarrassment. "You really must not go anywhere else with that bracelet, madam. I can't help it, I must tell you. Those are paste."

"They are diamonds, sir," she answered, more astonished than angry. "How can you know who have not tried them?"

"I know, because I took out the diamonds and put in paste, and within a few months," he answered.

Her first glance was one of surprise, then her eyes started open, and her face became deathly pale. She sat down and looked at the jeweller.

"I was told that it was by your orders," he said.

She drew a long breath, shivered a little, then rose to go.

"It was by my order, sir," she said, in a cold, quiet tone. "And I still desire that you may not say anything about it to Mr. Griffith or anyone else."

"I certainly shall not," the gentleman answered, opening the door for her, and bowing as she passed.

She went out with a haughty step, and home. It was late in the afternoon, and she had scarcely time to dress before Mr. Griffith came to take her down to dinner.

"Oh, you have a fine colour," he said, smiling as he offered her arm.

And she saw that his own colour was raised, and, remembering the scene she had witnessed, her heart had room for one feeling only, and that was a boundless pity.

She made every excuse, she had no blame to give. Had he not petted, and amused, smiled on her ever, when he must have been suffering tortures?



They took a table in the almost deserted dining-hall, and Mr. Griffith sent away the servants and waited on them himself.

"Now, what will you have?" he asked; "you don't take soup."

"Give me a bit of that trout. It looks nice."

He selected the most delicate piece, and laid it on her plate.

"Isn't there some salt on the plate?" she asked.

"I don't like my fish much salted."

He lifted the plate, and looked closely, then took his napkin and carefully wiped it.

"Yes, there seems to be a dust of salt. Servants are so careless."

She ate but little, then went up to his room with him, though at first she refused.

"I am so lonely to-night," he pleaded, and she yielded at once.

He seated her in a large chair that stood in the midst of a window full of moonlight, and stood behind her leaning on the back. The gas was unlighted, and only a wax taper made a faint light in the second room.

The eyes that looked over Beatrice Griffith's bowed head sparkled strangely in the pale moonlight, but the lips that kissed her forehead were soft and tender.

"Something troubles you, my darling," he murmured. "You are ill. I feel that I have been wrong in keeping you here. I am going to send for Mrs. Washburn to-morrow."

"Oh, no! I don't want her," said Beatrice, in a despairing tone of voice. "Don't send for her. Let her stay away. I don't wish to see anybody!"

"Beatrice," he exclaimed, "what is this?"

She burst into tears and for awhile sobbed uncontrollably in his arms. Then, at last, raised herself.

"Do pardon me, and let me go to rest," she said. "I am so nervous that I am really ashamed. Please don't mind me to-night."

"Come, and let me play to you," he said, leading her. "Music always soothes, and I cannot let you go away thus. Sit here. How many have in their pain cried out to music for help? You remember Shelley's sweet prayer,

"I pant for the music that is divine."

Then Byron, not so sweet, but dark and stormy, like his own soul:

"My soul is dark; oh, quickly string  
The harp I yet can brook to hear."

What words can I use to ease your pain, my own love?"

And while he was talking he had opened a flask of his precious wine, and now brought her a glass of it. She hesitated, looked at him, and then drank it.

"I don't care to stay to-night, Sidney," she said, faintly. "I had better go."

"My dear Beatrice, you seem so sad to-night!" he said, nervously. "I really fear that you are ill, or that something has occurred to displease you."

She got up and began to walk slowly to and fro with her hands clasped before her.

"I must know!" he exclaimed, at length, with passionate impatience, going to her, and stopping her in her walk.

Then she laid her two hands on his arm, and looked up into his face with wild and searching eyes.

"Sidney," she said, in a whisper, "I think you always knew that I loved you. I never myself knew how well till to-night. I only married poor Henry because you wished me to. My uncle said that and I could never forgive him for it. Now I forgive him. I knew then that it was true, but I never knew how entirely I was subject to you. Now I know that nothing would ever make me reveal what would injure, would ruin you."

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "I know that you love me, and am happy in that knowledge. But you speak in riddles."

She trembled still more, and clung to his arm.

"I would have laid down my life for you!" she went on. "I would have worked and toiled in silence and in exile to make you rich, if you wanted riches. I know not what sacrifice I would have hesitated to make."

"Dear child!" he murmured, tenderly.

"But much as I would have done to win your love still more would I do to win back my trust in you."

"What do you mean?" he demanded, recoiling.

She only stood and looked steadily at him, her hands closely clenched across her breast.

As she looked, a glaring light slowly grew in his strange feline eyes, and the colour all faded out of his face, leaving it like marble.

"Sidney," she said, in a hollow voice, "what was it that wine you gave me to-night?"

He looked a moment longer, then his face melted in a smile.

"Grape juice, my dear," he said.

She moaned faintly.

"And what made me so ill that night after the supper? And what has been slowly killing me with breakfasts and rare wines for invalids? Why do you never drink from the same flask or glass which you offer me? What was that powder on my plate which you called salt? You wiped it off with a napkin, and never used the napkin after. What was the matter with that little kitten that died?"

An expression of sorrowful incredulity and reproach came over his face as he looked at and listened to her. She waited, hurriedly breathing, for his answer.

"Oh, Beatrice," he exclaimed. Then, taking her hand, added: "Come out on the balcony under the stars and hear my answer."

The balcony to which they stepped was a small one outside one window only, and looking down three storeys to the street, not the main but a side street running by that side of Clarendon House.

A pure sky, twinkling with stars, looked down on them, and before and beneath them lay the city asleep in the calm and solemn midnight. If crime walked abroad it walked with stealthy footsteps, if sorrow waked and moaned its sobs were stifled. Everything was still and peaceful.

Presently there came a sound of a steam whistle, then the silence was broken by the roll and rattle of a train coming into the city.

The watchman in the street near Clarendon House pacing "his lonely round" suddenly stepped and listened. He thought that he heard a slight cry. And the next instant he heard it again, this time unmistakably, a wild cry that pierced every other sound. Then there was a strange sound. Then all was silence.

#### CHAPTER XI.

If since eve drew in, I say,  
I have sat and brought  
(So to speak) my thought  
To bear on the woman away,  
Till I felt my hair turn gray.

CHARLES BLAKE rode forty miles, after having been dismissed by Mrs. Griffith, and there, at a lonely wayside village, he stopped, and by a friend in the returning train sent to Beatrice the note of which he received before night the cinders.

He would fain have called pride to the rescue, but it did not answer to his call. He would fain have continued his journey and sought such distraction as change and gaiety would afford him. He could not go a mile farther. The only thing that he could do was to resist the impulse to return at once to town, and stay near his cousin, if out of her sight.

Between the haunting longing to return and the will to go on he stayed where he was.

The day dragged slow and hot, and through it all his uneasiness increased. He could not keep quiet. He wandered out and walked through the village, but without seeing a thing; only, long after, sights and sounds would float up on his memory, as fragments of a feverish dream. He attempted to dine, but food disgusted him; he smoked cigar after cigar, but grew more nervous instead of tranquil. Tormented by this unrest, unable to sleep, he put out his light and leaned from his window into the still, solemn night.

Leaning out and listening, strange sounds seemed to fill the silence. The beating of his heart grew loud and thick; and in with it he heard the rush of blood through his own arteries. Little rustlings of insects in the grass grew audible to his excited senses, the leaves, touched by a faint breeze, clashed loud as symbols, and he fancied that a wavering, rainbow halo that surrounded the moon crackled like northern lights.

His window was towards the town fifty miles distant, and he leaned and longed, and yearned towards that, towards her, till it seemed as though he beheld her.

The vision of her stood as he last saw her, mute, tearful and tender, gazing on him till he was shut out. All about him faded, his whole consciousness reaching out through his fixed eyes, heart and soul concentrated in that gaze, so longing, so full of will. His hands and feet grew chilly, all life gathered to its citadel and watch-tower, and the wings of time seemed to cut through space with a sharp hiss.

Then, as he gazed there, rapt, a strange horror came over him, a dread and fear unspeakable, from which he could not tear himself away. He shuddered all over, as though hanging over some awful abyss, and a cold perspiration broke out over him. Then a sharp cry of mortal terror rang through his ear, and the next instant he heard his own name called.

"Charles Blake!" in Beatrice Griffith's voice—yet not her voice as he had ever heard it, but wild with agonized appeal. It ran through him like fire,

and at the bound his heart gave the blood leaped hot to his forehead and his finger-tips.

"Beatrice!" he cried, in answer, almost springing from the window. Then, as the spell was broken by his own voice, he sank down on his knees, then fell back on the floor insensible.

He came to his senses again in a few minutes and raised himself up, bathed in perspiration and trembling in every limb, and with one fixed thought in his mind, to reach Clarendon House as soon as possible.

It was midnight, and a train would pass in ten minutes. He called a waiter, and ordered a carriage to be ready instantly. The servant, frightened at the gentleman's deathly face and wild manner, bestirred himself, and just as the train stopped at one side of the station their foaming horses drew up at the other.

Oh, how slowly they went. The stops seemed interminable; and, when within ten miles they found an obstruction in the road which must be removed, the frantic traveller struck his forehead in despair.

It was six o'clock in the morning when he reached Clarendon House, and alighted with staggering step from his carriage. A few loungers were about, and they looked at him strangely and drew back to let him pass, whispering to each other when he was gone. He met a good many people in the hall and they all stood out of his way and looked after him.

In the side hall again, that led to the west wing, there were others, and people stood in groups in their doors. All made way for him as he hurried on with that white face and those fixed eyes. The hall and the people swam to his eyes, and their whispers had a far-away sound in his ears.

Only one face did he see distinctly and that was a pale face in an open door, the door that led to Beatrice Griffith's parlour. The face was one he knew, and the lady gave a little cry on seeing him, said "Oh, Mr. Blake," then burst into hysterical weeping. He pushed past her and entered the room.

There was a grand piano opposite the door, and on that, in the faint light of the shaded room, lay a strange length, the awful outlines of a dead form showing through the white covering.

Charles Blake stood an instant, fixed, then turned quickly and eagerly, as though she would also look up and welcome him.

Ah, beautiful pale form! It was as though the form of Music had grown up from the keys, and lay there, dead! All in white, filmy laces—for they had just dressed her—flowers strewn about her white and sweet, her pale cheek turned into her waxen hand, one hand resting on her still bosom, brown locks wound smoothly and heavily around the sleeping head, brown lashes closely knit, sweet lips, rosy yet, gently closed. But the smile of the dead had not come yet, and the look was one of weariness.

One long look that drank in the whole, then Charles Blake flung himself, with wild weeping, on the lovely, precious form.

He had no questions to ask, he never heeded those who would draw him away, he never looked to see who it was that crouched at the end of the piano, his face buried in the cushions of a chair, groaning heavily, at intervals.

Sidney Griffith had not raised his face nor spoken a word for three hours, and he knelt there the whole day long, without heeding the continual crowd that came and went.

#### CHAPTER XII.

Lay her where the woodbine clingeth  
To the dark magnolia-tree;  
Where the breeze low music bringeth  
From the bosom of the sea.

But if Charles Blake, finding his love dead, had no room for questioning, it was not so with others. The town was electrified with the news of this strange accident, and the story was recounted far and near, a lady leaning in her balcony for coolness in the hot summer night, and smitten with sudden faintness, or falling asleep, or unaware leaning too far—who shall say by what fatal chance?—had fallen to the street, three storeys, and was found there, dead?

The watchman told his story, described the stillness of the night, the roll and shriek of the coming train, the first doubtful cry, the shrill scream, and the strange muffled sound of the fall, told how he searched and listened, and finally, when about to give up, how he saw something white on the walk beside Clarendon House, and, going, found there a lady, lying, dressed in white and with flowers in her hair; and how she breathed just once, and then died.

People in that wing of the house, and in houses near, all had heard, or fancied they had heard that cry.

All had a story to tell, and all crowded to see and to hear.

Every one of that vast crowd that had pressed to welcome the guests only a few evenings before remembered the fair lady who had come in before them, leaning on the arm of the Marquis D'Acres.

The marquis himself came, pale and grave, looked long in that fair, sweet face that had attracted him so. Friends gathered from far and near. Mr. Langdon came, pale and stricken, made an old man by that blow; Mrs. Langdon left her reckless follies and gaiety, and came, weeping, made a better woman and a kinder wife by the shock; and Mrs. Washburn came in a frantic state of self-reproach that she had left her darling, ready to overwhelm Sidney Griffith with reproaches also.

Why had he not taken better care of Beatrice?

But when she saw him kneeling and groaning there she forbore.

She, as well as others, refrained even from questioning him.

It was understood that only the evening before her death Beatrice had promised to be his wife, and, learning that, they all respected him as the chief mourner. Even Mr. Langdon clung to one whom his niece had loved so well.

The next day the poor child was carried out, covered with flowers, and borne to her rest.

Crowds lined the streets, and leaned from the windows, and darkened the very cemetery, standing all in solemn silence.

Children flung flowers in her way, and young girls sang with trembling voices round her grave. Everything was lovely though so sad.

And then the wheels of life and business started again, and people were gay, and forget, or only spoke now and then of that strange and dreadful affair.

But over the fow the dark cloud lingered. Charles Blake seemed utterly changed. He commenced doing business, working with restless persistency, looking always white, and never smiling.

Mrs. Washburn and Mr. Langdon could not live apart, it seemed, and would weep at every word, finding in everything a reminder.

Mr. Langdon wandered about restlessly, going often to Clarendon House, trying to see Sidney Griffith, begging his pardon over and over again for all past unkindnesses, and persisting in talking continually of Beatrice.

Mr. Griffith shrank with bare nerves from the subject, and John stood guard and kept the poor old gentleman away, with one and another excuse, when he could.

John's master saw but little company and scarcely went out at all. So great was his trouble that everybody felt a tender pity for him, and for a time even his creditors kept at bay. But only for a month.

Then they began to clamour again, and the silence, once broken, the tender that they had been silent.

The most troublesome one he quieted, and the man looked somewhat surprised after his interview with his creditor. Many others were surprised also; for a strange story began to float about. Mrs. Griffith had a will, leaving everything to her friend.

Her relatives indignantly denied it, and went to Mr. Griffith to deny the story.

"No," he said, sadly, "it is true. My poor darling would do it, because I had done the same by her. I had forgotten it almost till some of my creditors began pressing. Then, though I hated to claim it, I felt obliged to. I know she would have wished it."

The questioners dropped their heads and were silent.

Gossip was rife about the matter, and the amount of the insurance was variously stated. But at length Mr. Griffith's lawyer was called to account, and the insurance companies began to compare notes and to put on black holes.

Those who had pitied began to smile, and to speak of fortunate sorrows. For it was soon known that by the death of his beautiful betrothed the poor man became a rich man. It was certainly some consolation to a man of his tastes and circumstances, people said.

(To be continued.)

**THE QUAKERS.**—The minutes of the yearly meetings of the Society of Friends give a particular account of the "sufferings" of Quakers during the twelve months by seizures for church-rates or other ecclesiastical demands. These seem to be very fast diminishing, because the compulsory collection of church-rates has already become almost obsolete, and it is remarkable that in Essex alone, under the head of exactions for tithe rent-charge, the diminution in the year 1866, as compared with the previous year, was more than 500%. The whole amount taken by force from the Friends during the year was 2,711. 16s. 9d., being 211 cases of rent-charge, 2,432. 5s. 2d.; 39 of church-rate, 125l.; 21 of other

demands, 637. 11s. 0d. The highest amount was taken in Essex (1,213. 10s. 7d.); the lowest in Kent (47. 16s. 7d.). In Essex, for every individual Friend the State Church exacts 27. 2s. 3d.; in Norfolk and the adjacent counties, 18s. 8d.; in Suffolk, 9s. 1d.; in Cornwall, 6s. 2d.; in Sussex, 3s. 3d.; in London, 1s. 10d.; in some of the Midland counties, 3d. or 4d. only, and in Scotland nothing at all. In some counties the Friends are exceedingly few. In Derby, Lincoln, and Nottingham there are but 320; in Hereford, Worcester, and Wales, only 291; in Gloucester and Wilts, 272; in Westmoreland there are 269; in Suffolk, 255; in Cornwall, 215; in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, and Hunts together, but 198; in Devonshire, 192; in Kent, 154; and in Scotland, 166.

## FACETIE.

**SARAH-NADING EXTRA.**—Vake, lady, vake! The moon is high, the twinklin' stars are beamin', while now and then across the sky a meteor is streamin'! Vake, Sally, vake, and look on me—awake, Squire Nubbin's daughter! If I'll have you and you'll have me—By goah! whe throw that water?

## CONVERSION BY BARLEY.

It happened, when last I to market did go, I met in the High Street wi' Temperance Joe, By which means I axed un to come ever home, And said if 'a weed that I'd gie un some beer.

He come, and had dinner, but never a drop. Sez he, "I drink no beer beyond ginger-pep, Or quenches my thirst wi' a swig of cold tea; If thee 'st do the same 'oed be better for thee."

"Good beer, drunk in reason, don't do us no harm. Come, Joe," I sez, "have a look over the farm." "I'm willun," sez Joe, and wi' that out we struts. I show'd un the rye, and the wheat, and the wuts.

"New look at that grain crop—what is it, dost know?" That there, ripe for harvest! "Tis barley," sez Joe.

"Four acres," I said, "fine as ever you see, And well you med fancy wuth zinnut to me."

"Tis barley, of all sorts and speeches o' grain, As brings to the farmer most profit and gain. There's moor land put under 't than ever before, Of so much advantage it is to the grower."

"Ye' see, Joe, that barley's a sort of a tiding Don't need be na wuss for wet autumn or spring. 'Twill do if 'tis sowed at beginnin' o' May, For whate at laste two months too late in the day."

"A rayther wet harvest don't do it no ill— A little rain's wanted the corns far to fill. A mellow free pickle the malsters desires— Dost know, now, Joe, what fer they barley requires?"

"Of barley, friend Joseph, like that in full ear, Malt's made in the fust place, and next is made beer. If beer wuss't meant for a Christian to drain, What barley was made for I wished theod explain."

Sez Joe, "There's aitch sense in that sayne o' thine, These well nigh perma'd at me the pledge to resign, I fuder praised barley in that sort o' way, 'Till we at the Barley-Mow finished the day."

*Punch.*

If a Colt's pistol has six barrels how many barrels ought a horse-pistol to have?

**GIVEN AWAY, AND SOLD.**—Which is the cheaper, a bride or a bridegroom? The bride; she is always given away; the bridegroom is sometimes sold.

**GRASS WIDOWS.**—A writer says that he has come to the conclusion that the term grass widows arises from the fact that their husbands are always reaving "blades."

**ETIQUETTE.**—Gentlemen walking should keep their hands in their pockets. It shows their figure to advantage, keeps their hands warm, and out of other people's pockets.

**WAY! WOAH!**—A lady of our acquaintance, who is a bit of a blue, always calls the little memorandum that her butcher sends in with the meat, recording how many pounds it is, "Pencilings by the Weigh."

**WET PAINT WORSE THAN RED TARE.**—The public has been for upwards of thirty years prohibited from walking in the terrace which borders the front of the Palace of Versailles, facing the park, and the sentinel placed there was almost at his wits' end to make visitors understand that there existed some grave reason to prevent approach to that part of the chateau, while the side facing the Place d'Armes was freely accessible. Why this prohibition? Why, it appears that one day, more than the third of a century since, the windows of the ground floor were repainted, and a sentinel was stationed there to prevent

promenaders from rubbing against the wet paint. That was on the 25th of July, 1839. Three days after the Revolution gave a new Governor to the Palace, and he, out of respect for the existing state of things, and without troubling himself as to the reason of the sentinel being where he was, considered it a point of honour to maintain him there. So that the paint on the windows has taken upwards of thirty-six years to dry! The sentry's guard was religiously kept up, but the reason of his being placed there was forgotten. It is only within the last few months that the public has been admitted to the terrace, and the sentinel removed.

**USEFUL ASSISTANTS.**—When asked how he got out of prison a witty rogue replied: "I got out of my cell by ingenuity, ran upstairs with agility, crawled out of the back window in secrecy, and down the lightning-rod with rapidity, and am now basking in the sunshine of liberty."

**HIGH TRENDS.**—"I say," said a wag to a tall youth, whose appearance will be readily understood, "wasn't there a tall tree in front of your father's house?" "Why so?" inquired the young fellow. "Because you look so green; I reckoned you must have been brought up in the shade."

**A YOUNG LADY** at a temperance meeting said: "Brethren and sisters—Cider is a necessity to me and I must have it. If it is decided that we are not to drink cider I shall eat apples and get some fine young man to squeeze me, for I can't live without that delightful nectar the juice of the apple."

## "ANOTHER BREASTPIN."

A Quaker gentleman, riding in a carriage with a fashionable lady decked with a profusion of jewellery, heard her complain of the cold. Shivering in her lace bonnet and shawl as light as cobweb, she exclaimed:

"What shall I do to get warm?" "I really don't know," replied the Quaker, solemnly, "unless thee should put on another breastpin!"

**MODEL WIVES.**—A recent writer says: "There is many a proud-spirited, sensitive woman, who feels herself a beggar, and unless from absolute need will go without rather than ask her husband for money for her own use." Poor dears. We should like to have married such a wife.

**ANÆSTHETIC CORRECTION.**—It is said that some mothers in New York have grown so affectionate that they give their children chloroform, previous to whipping them.

**REASSURING.**—"Is there any danger of the boconstricator biting?" asked a visitor of a zoological showman. "Not the least," replied the showman; "he never bites, he swallows his wittles whole."

**IMPERTINENT.**—Theodore Keek once saw an exceedingly pompous man walking in a street in London, when he immediately accosted him: "Sir, may I inquire if you are anybody in particular?" He then walked off, without waiting for a reply.

**TALK HIM AT HER WEND.**—"I wish I had your head," said a lady one day to a gentleman who had saved for her a knotty point; "And I wish I had your heart," was the reply. "Well," said she, "since your head and my heart can agree, I do not see why they should not go into partnership."

**THE USEFULNESS OF DANCING.**—A dancing master, on being cast away on a desolate island, lived six months without any other food than that which he derived from "cutting pigeon wings," and stewing them. Here's a hint worth taking to sea. If learning to dance will prevent you from shuffling off this mortal coil it is the duty of every man and woman to grow wise in cotillions.

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION.**—The Sultan and the Viceroy of Egypt will, no doubt, feel highly gratified on learning that many English gentlemen have declared that they will not fire a shot upon the Moors this year.—*Fun.*

## A MARGATE MISEANTHROPY.

*Sniff (to his Jolly):* "Well may they call 'em Bats de 'est such weather as this! I never felt the 'eat so much before."—*Fun.*

**SOUTH LONDON MORALITY.**—Fifty-two tradesmen were fined the other day at Newington Sessions for having unjust weights, scales, and measures. The proper measures for such offenders would be imprisonment without the option of a fine, for they make light of fines as well as weights.—*Fun.*

**HIGHLY PROBABLE.**—A competitor in the late full-dress race by members of the Serpentine Swimming Club informs us that this useful accomplishment involves bedily exertion of no ordinary character—indeed, before he had swum one hundred yards he had not a dry thread about him.—*Fun.*

**"SERIOUS EXPLOSION AT THE MANSION HOUSE."**—We have been surprised to note that a paragraph



under this heading has been going the round of the papers. Judging from the reports of the speeches delivered by some of the City magnates on festive occasions, we should imagine that explosions—of a side-splitting character—are by no means rare in that locality, making it a matter of surprise that the press should consider the circumstance worthy of notice.—*Fun.*

OH! WHAT A BOOTY!

*Miss Crusher:* "Every girl gets a chance now-a-days. Last year it was red hair—this year pretty feet have their turn."—*Fun.*

**FORENSIC FASHION.**—*Miss Flanagan* says that if she were a man she should like to be a Queen's Counsel, because then she would have a silk gown.—*Punch.*

AN OBJECTIONABLE OLD MAN.

*Young Ladies:* "Going to make a flower-bed here, Smithers? Why it'll quite spoil our croquet ground!"

*Gardener:* "Well, that's your pa's orders, miss. He'll hev' it laid out for 'orticultur', not for 'usbandry'!"—*Punch.*

**A LONG WAY REMOVED.**—Old Singleton is constantly congratulating himself that he has no near relatives. He has some distant cousins, but they are all in New Zealand.—*Punch.*

"BY THE CARD."

*Pedestrian:* "How far is it to Sludgecomb, boy?"  
*Boy:* "Why, 'bout twenty 'under theausan' mild 'y' goe's 'year agoes' new, an' 'bout half a mild 'y' you turn right round an' 'goe' t' other way!"—*Punch.*

**CONTINENTAL GOSSIP.**—Baron Beust is taking warm baths at Gastein. It is hard that a politician who has managed to keep on amicable terms with everyone during the session should in the vacation have got himself into hot water. We hope he will come well out of it.—*Punch.*

"INCIDENT IN ACRYLAM," &c.

*Ensign Muffles* (alluding to his *Moustache*): "You see, some say, 'Wear it,' you know, and some say, 'Cut it off,' you know; but if I took everybody's advice I should be like the Old Man and his Denkey."

*Sergeant O'Rourke:* "Yeur'r hon'r'r would—(but not wishing to be personal about his officer's age), that is—laste ways—barria the old man, your hon'r-r-r!!!"—*Punch.*

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**GOLD POWDER.**—A gold powder is made by rubbing gold leaf with sulphate of potassa in crystals, the latter is afterwards washed out. Another gold powder can be made by rubbing gold leaf on a marble slab with honey or molasses, and afterwards washing out the molasses, when the gold will sink to the bottom.

**NEW PRESERVE.**—Now that the season of fruits is come we have to introduce to the notice of our readers one which has hitherto been neglected as being unworthy of notice for any useful purpose. We are indebted to Dr. Henry Rogers of East Grinstead, for calling our attention to the fruit of *Amelanchier baccata*, or snowy mesquite, which he has most successfully preserved in the ordinary way, by boiling it with sugar. It forms a rich preserve of a novel character, and its kernels contribute to it a fine almond flavour. He has also dried the fruit and used it in the same way as grocers' currants.

**TOMATO OMELET.**—Select one quart of fine ripe tomatoes, pour over them boiling water to remove the skin, then chop them finely, put them into a saucepan without any water, chop two onions very finely, cover closely, and let them simmer slowly an hour; then add a little salt and cayenne, a large spoonful of bread crumbs, and cover tightly; beat up five eggs to a stiff froth; have ready a heated pan, and a small piece of butter, just to grease it; stir the eggs into the tomatoes, beat all together, and pour it into the hot buttered pan, brown it on one side, fold it over, and serve on a hot dish the moment it is done. It is very nice with beefsteak.

**BAKING-POWERS.**—Coeley's powder is as follows: Tartaric acid,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb.; bicarbonate of soda and potato farina, or British arrowroot, of each  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. (each in powder); separately dry them perfectly by a very gentle heat, then mix them in a dry room, press the mixture through a sieve, and at once put into packets, observing to press it hard, and to cover it with the foil or close-made paper, to preserve it as much as possible from the air and moisture. Delfert's formula principally differs in the addition of alum and carbonate of ammonium. With the addition of a little tarmeric the compound becomes the "egg powder" so often seen in the windows of grocers and oilmen. These mixtures are used in

domestic economy as substitutes for yeast in bread and butter in pastry, and are, in their way and in their proper places, useful, although humble adjuncts to the *materia* (may we not say *medica*?) of the non-professional cook. There is no doubt that by enabling pastry to be made equally light, and with one-third less butter, the better class of baking-powders have prevented many a bilious and dyspeptic attack.

## TIRELESS.

Tireless flows the crystal stream  
Twixt its banks of moss and fern,  
Echoing love's bewildering dream  
In each quivering, shivering turn.  
Flashing flowers, that creep too near,  
With a falling spray of pearls;  
Laughing, gleeful, full of cheer,  
Tireless on its winding curls.

Tireless sing: the golden throat  
Through the pleasant days of spring;  
Seemingly he deems his note  
Sweetest that the warblers sing.  
Care and sorrow knows he not,  
Or he'd still his jubilee,  
Earth's to him a sunny spot,  
Made for music, mirth and glee.

Tireless zephyrs tremble through  
Balmy bowers of rustling leaves,  
Sipping morning's pearly dew  
That the starry night-king leaves,  
And when eve on dusky feet  
Softly stealth o'er the lea,  
Still untiring winds we greet  
From the cool, refreshing sea.

Streams, and birds, and zephyrs sweet,  
Tireless purrl and sing, and blow;  
Nature's great pulsations beat  
In a steady, ceaseless flow.  
Night is ever set with stars,  
Summer always has its flowers,  
Eve paints twilight's golden bars—  
Such things have no weary hours.

Only man, poor man, grows tired,  
Stepping by the way to rest;  
Oft in sloughs of care get mired.  
When grief comes, a gloomy guest.  
He forgets his old life-song,  
And his heart gets out of tune,  
And too oft the way seems long,  
When is passed youth's flowery June.

J. M.

## GEMS.

THE price of excellence is labour, and time that of immortality.

One of the most important rules of the science of manners is an almost absolute silence in regard to yourself.

The great blessings of mankind are within us, and within our reach, but we shut our eyes, and, like people in the dark, we fall foul upon the very thing we search for without finding it.

Impassioned enjoyment is attended with regret; a surfeit of pleasure with disgust. There is a certain nick of time, a certain medium to be observed, with which few people are acquainted.

Enthusiasm is always connected with the senses, whatever be the object that excites it. The true strength of virtue is serenity of mind, combined with a deliberate and steadfast determination to execute her laws. That is the healthful condition of the moral life.

**MARRIAGE.**—Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities and churches, and heaven itself. Celibacy, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out armies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and keeps order, and promotes the interests of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

**VOICE AND SOUND.**—It is a curious fact that musical sounds fly farther and are heard at a greater distance than those which are more loud and noisy. If we go on the outside of a town during a fair, at the distance of a mile, we hear the musical instruments, but the din of the multitude, which is so overpowering in the place, can scarcely be heard, the noise dying on the spot. To those who are conversant with the power of musical instruments

the following observation will be understood: The violins made at Cremona about the year 1600 are superior in tone to any of a later date, age seeming to dispossess them of their noisy qualities, and leaving nothing but the pure tone. If a modern violin is played by the side of one of these instruments it will appear much the loudest of the two; but on receding a hundred paces, when compared with the *Amati*, it will scarcely be heard. The voice of man is endowed with purity of tone in a higher degree than any of the vocal animals, by which, in a state of nature it enables him to communicate with his fellows at a distance very remote. Providence has bestowed upon children a power of voice, in proportion to their size, ten times greater than the adult. In a state of nature this serves them as a defence and protection; for it is well known that children have, by their cries, alarmed and kept off the attacks of the most furious animals.

## STATISTICS.

**TEN YEARS' INDIAN COINAGE.**—The value of the gold, silver, and copper money coined at the mints of the respective provinces of British India in the ten years ending April 30th, 1865, was as follows: 1856, 7,177,589*l.*; 1857, 10,969,034*l.*; 1858, 12,733,790*l.*; 1859, 6,792,196*l.*; 1860, 10,911,776*l.*; 1861, 5,503,668*l.*; 1862, 7,279,699*l.*; 1863, 9,532,416*l.*; 1864, 11,823,140*l.*; and 1865, 10,811,397*l.*

**THE SESSION AND PARLIAMENTARY CHANGES.**—The Session of Parliament, prerogued the other day, was opened in presence of the Queen on Tuesday, February 5, and therefore has lasted six months and sixteen days—about a week longer than the Sessions of late years. During that time the Lords sat on 93 days, or for 219 hours, being on an average about 2 hours and 20 minutes at each sitting. Their lordships divided 35 times. The Commons sat on 127 days, or for 928 hours, being on an average upwards of 7 hours and 20 minutes at each sitting. There were 154 divisions in the Commons during the Session. The "counts-out" were but seven.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

The marriage of the Crown Prince of Denmark with the Swedish Princess Louisa is definitely announced.

The arbitrators in the case of "Chatterton v. Sims Reeves" have awarded the plaintiff 1,500*l.* damages, and also the cost of the proceedings.

The great tabernacle of the "Salina" at Salt Lake City is now finished. It is 250 feet wide, and furnishes comfortable sitting room for 10,000 persons.

ABOUT twenty-eight miles north of Anokland there exist certain hot springs on the beach of Waiwera, which are said by the local practitioners to possess very remarkable power in the cure of rheumatism.

**HEART DISEASES IN CALIFORNIA.**—An extraordinary prevalence of diseases of the heart and arteries is reported in California, owing, it is thought, by the physicians in that locality, to the habit of using such large quantities of intoxicating liquors.

By an Act just issued it is enacted that in the construction of a will a general direction for payment of debts out of personality is not to include mortgage, debt, unless such intention is expressly implied.

It is now to be believed the *Nord*, the Paris Exhibition building will not be pulled down as soon as the Exhibition is over, but will be used for an international bazaar, in which the productions of all parts of the world will be offered for sale.

**JUDAS OUTWITTED.**—It is reported that Inarez has refused to authorize the payment of the 3,000 ounces of gold to Lopez for his treachery in betraying Queretaro. The Mexican dictator declared, "We must never encourage traitors."

FROM and after the passing of the new Inland Revenue Act certain documents are to be chargeable with the stamp duty of 1*d.* All letters of allotment of any share of any company, or proposed company, or in respect of any loan raised or proposed by any such company; also an scrip certificate, and an scrip or other documents in respect of any loan.

THE generosity of the Sultan at Vienna is described by the continental press in glowing terms. Besides the gift of 10,000 florins (1,000*l.*) to the poor of Vienna, his Majesty left 6,000*l.* for different benevolent institutions, especially those existing for the Jews and Greeks of Turkish nationality. In various ways during his stay at Vienna the Sultan dispensed not less than 50,000*l.*

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MICHAEL.—Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, abdicated in favour of his son, Victor Emmanuel, in 1849.

A. K.—The law of master and apprentice is not embodied in our statute.

E. M.—Engene Sue, the French novelist, was born in 1804, and died August 3, 1857.

ROBERT.—Lavater, the celebrated physiognomist, died in 1801, in consequence of a wound which he received in 1779, when the French, under Massena, took Zurich.

J. BERNET.—An apprentice, on attaining twenty-one, can leave his employer if he wish to do so, although the term for which he was apprenticed may have expired.

A CONSTANT READER.—The marriage is legal without doubt. The fact of giving two Christian names instead of one would not affect its legality.

ANTIQUARY.—To clean silver take a small quantity of sal-ammoniac, mix with three times the quantity of vinegar; use this liquid with a piece of flannel, then wash with clean water.

AVONIA.—No magistrate has any jurisdiction respecting the character of a domestic servant, and the common threat of a master or mistress being summoned for not giving a character is absurd.

PHILIP.—If you have a screw rusted into wood, or a nut or bolt, that will not readily turn pour on it a little kerosene and let it remain; in a short time it will penetrate the interstices, so that the screw may be easily moved.

JENUS.—The word *peripatetic* comes from one of the ancient sects of philosophers called *Peripatetics*, so named because they used to dispute walking up and down the Lyceum at Athens. They were the followers of Aristotle.

J. J.—Ephesus is a city in Asia Minor. The Goddess Diana was one of the ancient mythological deities, whose temple in Ephesus formed one of the so-called "seven wonders of the world."

J. D.—Dutch is a Teutonic language of the Low German class, and spoken by the people of Holland. The Flemish is so closely allied to the Dutch that it may be regarded as essentially the same language.

ANTAR ATLAS.—To destroy flies dissolve 2 drachms of the extract of quassia in a half-pint of boiling water, add a little sugar or syrup, pour the mixture on plates or in saucers, and the flies will be immediately attracted towards them.

R. ROBERTS.—Your writing at present is certainly not good enough for the office you mention, but practice and great attention to the formation of each letter, so as to make it distinct and legible, would soon render it all that is necessary.

A BEY OF YOUNG LADIES.—To remove sunburn or tan take half an ounce of blanched bitter almonds, half a pint of soft water, beat the almonds and water together till it forms a kind of emulsion, strain through a piece of muslin, and it will be ready for use.

E. J. PROUD (Preston).—Your son, being a deserter from the British Army, is clearly liable to be punished, if arrested. Under the peculiar circumstances you mention you should consult a respectable solicitor, who might negotiate with the authorities at the Horse Guards.

G. S.—To make red ink infuse 4 oz. of Brazil-wood rasped with 2 drachms of powdered alum in a pint of vinegar and a pint of rain water for two or three days, then boil over a moderate fire till a third part of the fluid has evaporated; let it stand a day or two before using.

E. L. W.—To make a black dye use copperas and logwood, but the colour will be greatly improved by first boiling the article to be dyed in a decoction of galls and alder-bark; if previously dyed blue or brown by means of walnut shells it will be still better.

ANT.—Game of all kinds is wholesome: the flesh of the leveret, roasted, is easily digested, and that of the tame rabbit is equally so, but the flesh of the wild rabbit is still more so, a quality which may be ascertained of all wild animals in preference to those that are shut up.

GEORGE E. WICKS.—I. The examination for clerks in the solicitor's office in the Outcomes consists of handwriting and orthography, arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions), English composition, geography, English history, and Latin. It is the same for all other clerks, with the exception of Latin. 2. Handwriting very good indeed.

GEORGE.—Few men die of age, almost all die of disappointment, passion, mental, or bodily toil, or accident. The passions sometimes kill men suddenly; the common expression "choked with passion" has little exaggeration in it, for, if not suddenly fatal, violent passions shorten life. Strong men often die young, weak men live longer than the strong, for the latter use their strength, and the former have

none to use; the weak take care of themselves, the strong do not; it is the same with the mind and temper as it is with the body. The inferior animals which live temperately have generally their prescribed term of years; the number bears proportion to the time the animal takes to grow to its full size, man therefore ought to live a hundred years, which he rarely attains, for he is not only the most irregular and intemperate, but the most laborious of all animals, also the most irritable, for man cherishes wrath to keep it warm, and consumes himself with the fire of his own reflections.

A CONSTANT READER.—1. We do not keep a register of outward and homeward bound ships. Your better course would be to apply personally to the shipowner, or to the editor of the *Shipping Gazette*. 2. To remove superfluous hair take 2½ oz. of resin, and 1 oz. of beeswax, melt, and form when cold into sticks for use; then rub a little into the parts affected.

GERTRUDE.—A good hair-dye may be made by taking a little nitric acid, ten times the quantity of nitrate of silver, nine parts of sap green, five parts of mudslake, mixed with plenty of water, and a few drops of musk; before using free the hair from grease, and apply the liquid by moistening a comb with it, and then passing it through the hair; the skin must not be touched with the dye.

IGNORAMUS.—1. To remove ink from calico or linen have a basin of boiling water, hold the material over this tightly, and rub in with the finger a little salts of lemon, which can be procured at any chemist's. 2. Many recipes have been given in our columns for the removal of warts, but a very excellent one is the following: Grate some horse-radish into new milk, and after it has stood for a few hours apply with a linen rag.

GEORGE.—Geometric crystals may be formed in the following way.—Take a lump of alum and suspend it by a thread in a tumbler of water; leave it untouched for some days, and then upon removing it there will be found a crystalline arrangement presenting the appearance of geometrical figures, apparently carved out upon its surface.

## COME HOME AGAIN.

Come home again! for home is dearer without thee;  
My dearest tokens offer me relief;  
How can I live while thou art not about me?  
Then come to me, and ease me of this grief.

My darling, come!

Come home again! What fascinates thy staying?  
Has this lone heart no more a charm for thee?  
If no, alas! I wait then thus delaying,  
When thou couldst calm the fears that dwell with me?

My darling, come!

Come home again! Oh, how my heart is yearning,  
When busy day and all its tumults rest;  
For then, methinks, I hear thy steps returning,  
To press me once again to thy dear breast.

My darling, come!

Come home again! Dost thou no longer cherish  
The home that is no home while thou art gone?  
Oh, come to me, or this poor heart will perish,  
While for thy sweet companionship I mourn.

My darling, come!

L. B.

E. A. H., twenty, tall, fair, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and about twenty-three.

GEORGINA, eighteen, 5 ft. 4 in., fair hair, blue eyes, good looking, good tempered, and will have 3000.

PARK CAREW, in a good social position, with about 6000 a year. Respondent must be pretty, clever, and of a cheerful temper.

W. A. T., sixteen, 5 ft., light hair, hazel eyes, and good looking. Respondent must be between sixteen and seventeen, blue eyes, and pretty.

HEBE, seventeen, tall and slight, fair, dark brown hair, and gray eyes. Respondent must be tall, dark, and have a salary of 2000.

FALICITAS, thirty-three, a widow with a family. Respondent must be a sailor between thirty and forty, and of temperate habits; no objection to a retired pensioner.

LEZZIE W., (a widow with a small family), thirty-two, tall, dark, cheerful disposition, and businesslike. Respondent must be a respectable tradesman or mechanic.

LILY LEE, twenty, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, no fortune. Respondent must be dark, medium height, and have a good salary.

FLORENCE MARY, eighteen, tall, fair, brown hair and eyes, good looking, and with a moderate fortune. Respondent must be a gentleman about twenty-one. (Handwriting very good.)

J. S. (a tradesman's daughter), twenty, 5 ft. 4½ in., fair, dark brown hair, and very respectable. Respondents must be about twenty-four, tall and respectable. (Handwriting rather good, but would be improved by practice.)

ROSS W., nineteen, fair, good looking, sunburn hair, dark, blue eyes, clear complexion, domesticated and accomplished, and has a good fortune. Respondent must be tall, dark, about twenty-three or twenty-four, and fond of home.

LUCIA, SUSY, and ALMA. "Lucia," nineteen, tall, dark, good looking, and will have some money; an artist preferred. "Susy," eighteen, tall, good looking, and will have money on coming of age. "Alma," seventeen, medium height, has no money, but a faithful and loving heart.

MARIA and EMMA. "Maria," twenty, not pretty, black hair, and blue eyes. "Emma," twenty-one, not good looking, a good disposition, chestnut hair, and hazel eyes. Respondents must be steady, and about twenty-five; mechanics preferred.

JULIA and MADOLINE. "Madoline," twenty-one, 5 ft. 3 in., fair, good tempered, fond of home, and domesticated. "Julia" (a tradesman's daughter), twenty-two, 5 ft., fair, good looking, and domesticated. Respondents must be well educated, tall, dark, and have moderate incomes.

F. VALLER.—There is a plan which has been successfully adopted at Arxonne (Cote d'Or) of preserving crops against caterpillars and other insects, by placing artificial nests of wood or pottery about the farms or vineyards; these nests rapidly become inhabited by small birds, particularly the titmouse, who devour the insects. This mode has been long known in Germany and Switzerland, where it is employed on a large scale. In 1852 to 1857 the pine forests of Grun-

heim, in Saxony, were ravaged by two destructive species of caterpillars; 121 artificial nests were placed throughout the plantations, legions of starlings and other insectivorous birds took up their abode in them and multiplied, and the evil was speedily and effectually suppressed. In fact, that class of birds perform most valuable service to the cultivator.

RALPH MARKHAM.—1. To promote the growth of the hairs good pomade may be made by the following ingredients: 2 oz. of white wax, 1 oz. of palm oil, 2 drachms of the best olive oil, dissolve thoroughly over a slow fire, then stir it till nearly cold, and add 1 oz. of castor oil, and a small quantity of perfume. 2. The colour of the hands may be improved by taking 2 oz. of Venice soap, and dissolve it in 2 oz. of lemon juice; add 1 oz. of the oil of bitter almonds, and the same quantity of the oil of tartar, mix, and stir till it has acquired the consistence of soap, and use it as such for the hands. 3. Handwriting very clear and distinct.

C. ALLEN.—There are various stories as to the origin of the word "hamburg." One of the best authenticated states that it is a corruption of Hamburg, and originated in the following manner: During a period when war prevailed on the Continent so many false reports and bulletins were fabricated at Hamburg that at length when anyone wished to signify his disbelief of a statement he would say, "That's from Hamburg" or "That's a Hamburg," or he would simply sneer "Hamburg," which finally became corrupted into "hamburg."

JULIUS.—The London Mechanics' Institution was the first of the kind established in London by the late Dr. Birkbeck; it has called into existence nearly 600 institutions of a similar character in different parts of Great Britain, and since its foundation in 1823 more than 40,000 persons have availed themselves of its advantages, many of whom are now distinguishing themselves in various branches of the arts and sciences. The annual subscription for gentlemen is 12 s., for ladies 10s. 6d.

M. M'DERMOTT.—Nothing is so deleterious as dissipation; it destroys the physical and mental energies, and what is of still more importance is the cause of great waste of time, of which no one has a right to be prodigal, for we are all responsible for the manner in which it is spent; and independence of the justice we owe to ourselves there is a career of usefulness open to all who choose to follow it. There is nothing more ignoble than to waste valuable time in law and vicious pursuits, which ought to be devoted to nobler purposes.

J. DILLON.—The lung of a man is an aggregation of bronchial tubelets and air-cells, the latter are very minute; between these air-cells run the capillary blood-vessels, thus each side of a blood-vessel is exposed to the air contained within a cell, and the gases pass to and fro through the delicate wall of the cells and through the walls of the capillaries with perfect facility. So crowded are the blood-vessels that the diameter of the meshes formed by their network is less than the 3,000th of an inch, and the number of air-cells, is calculated at not less than six hundred millions.

ETHEL.—The tongue is a powerful instrument either for good or for evil; from it proceed the stirring strains of eloquence which delight us, the cheering tones which encourage us, and the sweet cadences of kind expression which soothe and comfort us. From it also proceed the withering epithets of slander and calumny which are sharper than blows, and the poisonous shafts of ill-will which pierce the soul and rankle therein; but there is a charm about a kind word which often either entirely overcomes or considerably subdues the bitterest invectives of and the most violent ebullitions of passion; it will often blunt the arrows of envy and turn aside the fierce darts of scornful abuse. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger."

OMEGA.—Books are of two kinds—those for study and those for reading. Reading merely is not study, and therefore when a book of the former class is taken in hand, let it be with a determination to master its contents. In textbooks of study use the latest and the best works of the highest authorities, though more expensive at first they are cheaper in the end, both in time and money. A first-rate professor of a subject will find no difficulty in adapting himself to his readers, simply because he thoroughly understands his subject. A third-rate author fails to do this, and hence his readers are perplexed to comprehend his meaning, and frequently are induced to give up the subject in disgust.

POETRY.—"Number Four's Query," by J. H. B., is faulty in the extreme, being incorrect in rhythm and general construction—"Requiem," by "H. B.," we must decline with thanks as not being quite up to our standard; but try again, a second attempt may prove more successful.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

EDWARD JONES is responded to by—"Susie," fair, and a tradesman's daughter.

GENERAL BUCKER by—"Nelly O'Brien," twenty-three, 5 ft. 8 in., dark, good looking, a Catholic, and expects shortly to be in possession of 500.

AGATHA by—"L. Ch. D.," who thinks he would suit.

JOSEPHINE by—"Dick Martingale," a sailor, twenty-eight, 5 ft. 7 in., light complexion, good looking, and would like to exchange cards *de vicinis*.

ADRIEN by—"Clarence Heddell," eighteen, 5 ft. 11 in., dark, and has a salary of 4000.

PART LIII., FOR OCTOBER, IS NOW READY. PRICE 6d.

\* \* \* NOW READY, VOL. VIII. OF THE LONDON READER. Price 4s. 6d.

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